

The argument of the Epistle to the Hebrewes, gathered by Des. Erasmus of Roterodame.

Nacion resisted the gospel of Chyriste with moze obstinate mindes, then the Jewes, which bare also a speciall malyce agaynste Paule, partly for that, that he openly pzoessed himselfe to be an Apostle of þ heathen, whome the Jewes abozred as vnreligious, and godles: and partly because he seemed to abolishe Moses lawe, which they counted most holy, & desired the same to be published thozough all the wo:ld in the stede of the gospel. Insomuche that there were some euen amonge them that had receyued Chyristes doctrine, which thought that the obseruacion of the lawe ought in any wyse to be toynd and coupled with the gospel. Wherfoze the faythfull at Hierusalem, were sondrie wayes vexed and iniured by such as resisted the gospel. For the aduersaries beeing commen officers, and hauing the publike auzoritie in their handes, the sincere pzoessours of the gospel were caste into prison, were scourged, and suffered spoyle and losse of theyr goodes. Paul therfoze cõfõrteth these good men by þ example of the old sainctes, which for the moste parte were exercised with such like, or greuouser calamities that their vertue therby might be tried, and made moze excellẽt. But chesely he cõfõrteth them with the example of Chyriste, and hope of the heauenly reward. After this he declareth that now that Chyristes gospel hath shewed furth his shyning lyght, the shadowes of Moses lawe haue vanished a wale, and continue no longer. And in this place he repeteth many thynges out of the olde testamẽt, and applieth them, vnto Chyrist. He teacheth further, that we ought not to hope for saluacion by keepyng of the lawe, which was geuen but for a tyme, & was vnperfyt, but by fayth, by which those olde notable holy men, whose remẽbraunce the Jewes had in great veneracion, chiefely pleased God. In the ende he teacheth certayne rules pertainyng to chrystian maners.

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The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle of the Apostle saincte Paule to the Hebrewes.

The fyrst Chapter.

The text. God (in tyme past) diuersly and many wayes spake vnto the fathers by Prophetes: but in these laste dayes he hath spoken vnto vs by his owne soune, whom he hath made heire of all thynges: by whome also he made the worlde. Whiche soune bringe the bryghtnes of hys glory, and the very ymage of hys substance, carynge all thynges with the worde of hys power: hath by hys owne persone purged oure synnes, and stretcheth on the ryghte hande of the maiesty on hye: being so muche more excellent then the Angels, as he hath by inheritaunce obtayned a more excellent name then they.



Where as in tymes past almyghtie God, desyrous, for the tender loue he bare towarde vs, to prouyde for the health and saluacion of mankynd spake oftentimes diuerslye, and many wayes by his Prophetes, vnto whome he appeared and shewed hym selfe somtimes in a clowde, somtymes in fire, otherwhyles in a softe whistling winde, no we vnder one likenesse, and no we vnder an other, somwhyles by Angels, somwhyles by secrete inspiration of mynde: at the length in these laste dayes, because he would moze manifestly declare his charitie towarde vs, and put vs in moze assuraunce, he dayned to speake vnto vs, not by Angell, no yet by a man Prophete, but by hys onely soune Iesus Christ, whome he hath by his eternall appoyntment and determinacion made heyre and Lorde, not alonely of the Jewythe nation, but of the whole worlde, as hym that is his true & only soune, who is the Lord of all thynges that are made in heauen & in earth, according as the father promised befoze in y psalmes. Whether is it any merueyle if he would haue the seignozy of the whole world commen betweue hys soune and hym, syth that by him he made the same. By worde he made the worlde, and the soune is the eternal worde of the euerlastyng father: neither made he the worlde by hys soune, as by an instrument, or seruaunte, but all thynges were so wrought in the creatiō therof, that there was one, & the selfe same power of the father creating it, and the soune. For Iesus Christ is not so the soune of God, as godly men are oftentimes called the children of God, because they obey gods commaundementes, but because he was begottē God of God the father, and so begotten, that he is of the same nature with the father. And where as he was the euerlasting bryghtnesse of the fathers glory, as light procedyng from light, and the very image and resemblance of hys substance lyke in all poyntes and equal vnto hym of whome he was gotten: and where he is not alonely the maker of all creatures, but also gouerneth and turneth aboute all thynges that are made and created with his becke and almyghty commaundement together with almyghty God the father: yet marke whitherto he abased him selfe for our cause.

He took by him mans nature subiecte to al the iniuries of our wretched state and conditiō: and dying, offered by him selfe a sacrifice for our sinnes in the aulter of the crosse: & whereas befoze the priest of Moses lawe was woonte to pouurge synnes by the offering of a beasts bloude, he purged the offences of all mankynd by the dying of his owne holy bloude, and by this abasyng and humblyng of hymselfe gate so greate glozy, that after he was ressed, and returned into heauen, he sate on the ryght side of the maiestie of God the father, wherein he was alwayes egall vnto hym as touching his diuine nature. But his maiestie moze plainly appeared vnto the worlde thozowe his humilitie, in somuche that he, who semed befoze moze lowe and abiecte then the loweste, is nowe greater, and so takē, not only then the prophetes, but also then the Angels selves: and so much the greater, as the name of a soune hath in it moze dignitie then the name of a seruaunt. For this worde angell is a vocable or worde signifying a minstre, and is a name agreyng to an inferioure. Undoubtedly high and great is the dignitie of aungels, for that they alwayes assyste the father, and beholde hys visage. And amonge them there are some that excell the rest in dignitie.

For vnto which of the Angels sayd he at any tyme? Thou art my sonne, thys daye haue I begotten the. And agayne, I will be hys father, and he shall be my sonne. And agayne, when he bringeth in the flesh begotten sonne into the worlde, he sayeth: And let al the Angels of God worshippe hym. And vnto the Angels he sayeth: He maketh his angels spirites, & his ministers a flame of fyre. But vnto the soune he saith: Thy seate (O God) shall be for euer and euer. The scepter of thy kyngdome is a ryght scepter. Thou hast loved ryghtewisnes, and hated iniquitie. Wherefoze God euen thy God, hath anoynted thee with the oyle of gladnes aboute thy felowes.

The text

But vnto what Angell dyd God euet geue so great honour, that he vouchesafed to call hym by the name of his soune: whereas he speaketh vnto Christe in the mysticall psalme in this wyse: thou art my sonne, I haue begotten thee to day. And again: I will be his father, he shall be my sonne. For he made angels of nought, but his soune he begate of his owne proper substance, lyke in every thing & egall vnto hymselfe. Agayne when in the mysticall psalme he bringeth his soune into the worlde, haulyng vpon hym the habite of mans body, he speaketh in this maner: And let al the angels of God worshippe hym. True it is that seruantes are honoured, but the soune (who is egall with the father) is adored & worshipped. But where holy scripture expresseth the dignitie of aungels, what saith it? Who maketh (saith the scripture) his angels, spirites, & his ministers a flame of fyre. That angels were created, that haue they commen with othertingues which were likewise created of almighty God. That they were made spirites and myndes free from the mortalytie & corruption of mans body, & that they alwaies burning with godly charitie assiste their maker, as quicke and nimble ministers of his godly will, & commaundement, therein vndoubtedly they excell vs. But howe much greater are the wordes that he speaketh vnto the soune: Thy seate, O God, shall be for euer and euer, the scepter of thy kyngdome is a right scepter. Ye heare how the name of God is geuen vnto the soune: ye heare howe the seate of a kyngdome, is geuen hym: of a kyngdome, I saye, that neuer shall haue ende.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

It foloweth in the same psalme. Thou hast loued ryghtuousnesse, and hated iniquitie, wherfoze God, euen thy God, hath enoynted the with the oyle of gladnesse aboue thy felowes. We heare that he was specially enourented of God the father aboue all hys felowes, eyther men, or aungels.

The teste. And thou Lorde in the begynning haste layde the foundacion of the earth, and the heauens are the workes of thy handes. They shall peryshe, but thou endurest. But they all shall be olde also as doth a garment, & as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou arte euen the same and thy yeres shall not faile. Unto whiche of the aungels sayd he at any tyme: sitte on my right hande tyll I make thine enemies thy foete. Are they not all ministering sprytes that are sente to minister for they? whiche whiche haibe hopes of saluacion?

And agayne marke howe muche autozytie is geuen the some in another psalme: and thou Lorde (sayth the Prophete) in the begynning haste layde the foundacions of the earth, and the heauens are the workes of thy handes. They shall peryshe, but thou endurest, and they all shall waxe olde as doth a garmente, and as a vesture shalt thou winde them aboute, and they shall todaynly be changed, but thou art euen the same, and thy yeres shall not faile. To what aungell were these wordes first spoken, or els this that is redde in another psalme: Sytte on my ryght hand till I make thine enemies thy foetstole. Therfoze neither autozytie to create, neither the maiestie of a kindome, is geue unto aungels, but they all (howe greate so euer they be) are spirites appoynted to serue, the which are of ten tymes sente into the woelde, to assiste suche as shall be then heritours of euerialyng saluacion. Such vndoubtedly are the disciples and folowers of Christe.

The. ii. Chapter.

The teste. Wherefore we oughte to geue the more esteeme hede to the thynges that are spoken by to vs, lesse at any tyme we perperse: For of the woordes which was spoken by aungels was made faste: And eury transgression and disobedience receyued a iuste recompence of reward: Lowe shall we escape, if we despoyle to greate saluacion, whiche at the first beganne to be preached of the Lorde hym selfe, and was confirmed vnto vs worde, by them that heare it: God bearing witness thereto, both with signes and wonderes also, & with dyuers myracles, & giftes of the holy ghost, according to his owne will. For vnto the aungels hath he not subdued the woeld to come, wherof we speake: but one in a certayne place witnesseth, saying: What is man that thou art myndfull of him? Or the sonne of man that thou visitest hym? Thou maddest hym a little lower then the aungels: thou hast crowned hym with honour and glory, and hast sette hym aboue the workes of thy handes. Thou hast putte all thynges in subiection vnder his feete. In that he put all thynges vnder hym, he sette nothing that is not put vnder hym. Nevertheless, we se not yet all thynges subdued vnto him, but hym that was made lesse then the aungels, we se that it was Jesus, which is crowned with glory and honour for the suffering of death, that he by the grace of God, should take of death for all men.

Moreouer that I haue so largely declared the dignitie of oure sauiour, is for this entent, that the greater he is, whome the father hath sent into the woelde for our saluacion, the more diligent hede we maye geue to such thynges as he hath spoken by to vs lesse at any tyme we forgette those thynges which the father hath taught and shewed vs by hym. Highest is he that sent hym, and a greater ambassadoure coulde he not send.

Hys pleasure was that this shoulde be the last ambassade or legacion: neyther is there any hope of saluacion if we despise this and sette it at naught, as our elders and forefathers despised Moses & the prophetes. The greater that the ambassadour is: the greater that the clemencie and gentlenesse of God is to wardes vs: the greuouser shall the faulte of oure dysobedience, or els negligence be, excepte we do after hys wordes and teaching. For yf al that God hath hitherto commaunded vnto our elders by hys Prophetes or aungels (who shewed vnto Moses goddes commaundementes be of weight and autozytie: And if those were woꝛthely punished that dysobered suche thynges as were by them commaunded (bycause he semeth to despise God, who so despyseth hys messengers) howe shall we then escape punishmente if we despise and sette at naught, not Moses commaundementes, but so ready saluacion, so notable, so euident, and suche as is frely brought vs, not by Moses, noꝛ yet by aungels or Prophetes (agaynst whome there may be some suspicion of vauitie or lying by one meanes or other ymagyned) but by the sonne of God hym selfe, who spakenot vnto vs a farre of out of a cloude, either in a dreame, or by any other waye wherin there myght be any suspicion of deceyte or legerdemayne, but was openly heard, scene, handeled, and conuersaunte alonge tyme amonge men, declarung by very many and moſte euidente argumentes & proofes, that he was the very sonne of God, and offerung perfitte saluacion vnto al the whole woꝛlde throꝛough faith of the gospel. And where as the belefe of this so great a thing beganne first to be taught and preached vnto the woꝛlde by our Lord Iesus Chryſt hym selfe, who was not alonely the preacher of euerlasting saluacion, but also y autoure therof: after ward the same was confirmed of them that were wytnesses of all thynges that he sayde and dyd whyles he was conuersaunte with them: and lest theyꝛ preachyng shoulde haue bene of small autozytie and litle regarded, God him self confirmed theyꝛ woꝛdes with diuerse signes of miracles and wonders, and other merueylous gyftes, the whiche that heauenly spirite diuerſly dystributed vnto hys, as he thought expediente for mannes saluacion: by all which thynges it appered very manifestly, that all this that was done was nothing partayning to mannes power, but to the vertue and power of God, and that he who firste hym selfe, & afterwarde by his disciples shewed these thynges, was not a man onely, but God couered with the habite of mannes body: And also that he was not an aungel the mystical Psalm playnly declareth, witnesſyng of Chryſt on this wise: what is manne that thou art myndfull of hym: or the sonne of manne that thou careſte for him: Thou haſte humbled him a litle while lower then angels. And streight wayes it foloweth: Thou haſte crowned him with gloꝛy & honour, and set him aboue the woꝛkes of thy handes. Thou haſte putte all thynges in subſeccion vnder hys ſecte. &c. Or euer y God created the earth, it was then decreed by hys godly determynacion, that whatſoever shoulde be therein, the same shoulde be vnder the obeyſaunte and subſeccion of Iesu Chryſte. It is not read that God gaue the ſeignory or Lordſhippe of all the woꝛlde (in the which aungels are also conteyned) to any of the aungels, for he that sayed: All thynges are to be put vnder hym, excepted nothyng that is not to be put in subſeccion.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

And the prophetic of thys psalme is partely fulfilled, and partely to be accomplished in the world to come. For as yet we see not all thynges vnder his subiection. As yet the wicked do rebell, and there is a greate conflict betwene the church and the world. But thys we see now fulfilled, that Iesus who when he was here afflicted wyth diuerse tormentes, and in conclusion suffered the punishment of the crosse, and for mans cause tasted that whych by mannes iudgement is mooste bitter and dyspleasaut, but tasted it in such wyse y he was not overcome therwyth, semed hereby to be made lower then aungels, who are neyther subiecte to death, nor any greite oz payne: we see (I saye) that Iesus is now crowned wyth so great glozy and honour, that y world perceiueth how he beyng a fauteslesse parsonne, and free from all synne, suffered punishment of death accordyng to the wyl of God, wylling by thys meanes to prouyde for mannes safetie. For hys death was not a punishment for any offence by hym committed, but was the mere fauour of God towarde mankynde, whom he woulde of hys free beneficence and greate lyberalitie, haue to be redeemed by y death of his mooste innocent sone Iesus Christ. And as he coude not promote vs to the felowshyp of immortalytie onlesse he were God: so was it not mete that he, who created all thynges, and by whose moderation all thynges were gouerned, should suffre y wholly to perishe, whiche he created and made. Where were the sonnes kyndome yf he were alone with the father.

The text. For it became him, for whome are all thynges, and by whome are all thynges (after that he had brought many sonnes vnto glozy) that he should make the Lord of theyr saluation perfecte thowhe afflictions. For both he that sanctifyeth, and they which are sanctified, are all of one. For whiche causes sake, he is not ashamed to call them brethren, sayng: I wyll declare thy name vnto my brethren, in the myddes of the congregacion wyl I praise thee. And agayne, I wyll put my trust in hym. And agayne, beholde, here am I, and the chyldren whom God hath geuen me.

Therefore it was thought mete & conuenient vnto almighty God the father, that the sonne beyng the autoure and chiefe causer of all mennes saluacion, should, after he were tried and proued by many afflictions, not only purchase himselfe then heritaunce of euerlastyng glozy, but also bring wyth hym many other chyldren, reconciled vnto the father by hys death. And therefore he toke vpon hym mannes body, because that beyng manne, he might purghe and purge manne of hys offences. For the priest Christ which purvsieth, and men that are cleansed and purvsted, as touchyng y nature of man, do yssue of the same firste parent, lyke as they haue one common father in heauen. Wherefore the sonne of God is not ashamed in the psalmes to call godly folke hys brethren, when he speaketh thus as foloweth: I wyll declare thy name vnto my brethren, and in the myddes of y congregacion wyl I praise thee. Doth not he here openly call his disciples brethren, and agayne in a certayne other place: I wyl put my trust in him. Nowe it is the parte of a proued childe, to truste his father with all hys harte.

Certes

Certes (yth the father promised that he woulde put all thynges vnder hys sonnes secte, there is no doubt but he wyl saue those also, with whome the sonne reygneth). Agayne in an other place in the Propete Esaye, the Loꝝde calleth his disciples his childꝛen when he sayeth: I and my childꝛen whom god hath geuen me. You heare the vocables oꝛ names of kynred.

Forasmuche then as the childꝛen are partakers of fleshe and bloude, he also himselfe lykewise toke parte with them that (thorowe death) he myght expell hym that had lordshyppe ouer death, that is to saye the deuyll, and that he myght deliuer them, whiche thorowe feare of death, were all theyꝛ lyfe tyme subdued vnto bondage. For he in no place taketh off hym the angels: but the seede of Abraham taketh he on hym. Wherefoze, in all thynges it became hym to bee made lyke vnto his bꝛethꝛen, that he myghte bee mercifull and a faythfull hꝛe pꝛiest in thynges concerning God, for to pouge the peoples sinnes. For in that he forsooke hymselfe to bee tempted, he is hyable to succer them also that are tempted. The text.

Because therefore these bꝛethꝛen and childꝛen whome he speaketh of, be men whiche consist and haue theyꝛ being of fleshe and bloude, he that of hys owne nature was heauenly, woulde take mans fleshe and bodye vpon hym, and therein dee made lyke vnto those whome he woulde call vnto the felowshyp of the eternall kynred, that he myghte expell hym who hadde the rule and lordshyppe ouer death, that is to saye the deuyll, and sette those at libertie, who were alwayes subiect vnto the seruitude and bondage of Satan, which thorowe death raigned ouer all mankynde. For whosoever is in bondage and subiection of sinne, the same is subiect vnto death. Now Christ neuer gatte any aungell this honour, that he woulde take hys nature vpon hym, & become his bꝛother, oꝛ his kinseman. But accoꝛding vnto gods promise, he tooke on hym the seide of Abraham. He was boꝛne a Jewe of Jewes, a manne of man, subiecte vnto all the incommodities and euilles of our nature, to thurst, hunger, heate, colde, werines, payne, and death, because thys likenes shoulde testifie the true kynred of nature, and put vs in a sure beleefe, that he woulde not forsake those for whome he had suffered so great euilles, a displeasur, and whom he had ioyned vnto hym with so streighte a bonde of auaunce oꝛ consanguinitie. Wherefoze it was conuenient that he shoulde in all poyntes be made lyke vnto those, whome he woulde haue to be his bꝛethꝛen, that he might thereby put them in moze assurauce to obtayne pardon, in asmuche as he, who tooke vpon hym thosyce of an hꝛe pꝛiest oꝛ bishop to make intercession vnto god to purge al the peoples sinnes, and to reconcile mankynde vnto the father, shoulde seme by this reason, howe he woulde bee mercifull and faythfull to hys, not onely for that he was of the selfe same nature, but also because it chaunced hym to be tryed and pꝛoued with innumerable afflictions of this woꝛlde, to the intent he shoulde appeare the readyer to succoure those, whiche shoulde be vexed with the euils and aduersities of the same.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

The.iii.Chapter.

11c

Therefore holy brethren, partakers of the celestial calling, consider the ambassadour and hie priest of our profession Christ Iesus, how that he is faythfull vnto hym that put him in the offyce, euen as was Moyses in at his house. For looke home much honoure he (that hath builded a house) hath more then the house it selfe: So muche honoure is he counted woorthye of more then Moyses. For euery house is builded of some man. But he that ordeined all thynges is God. And Moyses verely was faythfull in all hys house, as a minister, to beate witnes of those thynges, whiche were to bee spoken afterwarde. But Christe (as a sonne) hath rule ouer the house, whose house are we, yf we holde fast the confidence and the reioysing of that hope, vnto the ende.



Wherefore brethren, now that ye be purified by the bloud of the sonne, & by the free goodnesse of God called to come to bee partakers of the lyfe celestiaall, to thentente you maye bee the more answerable vnto his benefites, consider howe xcellent in dignitie is Iesus Christ, the ambassadour and bishop of your professon, that is to say, of euangelicall fayth, and howe purely and vertuously the same behaued hymselfe to godwarde, of whome he was ordeyned in the whole congregacion, lykewyse as Moyses was commended for that he acquitted hymselfe as a faythful minister, in all his synagogue, which is the house and familie of god. But Christe deserued so much the more honoure and dignitie, as the maker of the house oughte more to bee honoured then the house it selfe. For euerye house is buylded of some man. But he that hath ordeyned and made all thynges is god. Therefore Moyses was so conuersaunt in the house of god, that he was a part or member, and not the auto; and original causer therof. And verely this vertuous & godly man Moyses, is woozthy to be of great auto;ritie among vs, because he behaued hymselfe faythfully in the same house, but yet as a minister or steward and not as a sonne: he was in an other mannes house, and the other, that is to saye Christe, in his owne. And Moyses brought onely figures & shadowes of those thynges which Christe should afterwardes dysclose and open. But Christe as the maker and sonne guided his owne house, whereof we all are members whiche thozowe fayth of the gospell, bee assembled together vnto hys churche or congregacion: so that we perseuet in that we beganne, that is to wit, if we dooe styl abyde in the conco;rd and agreaunce of the house, and holde fast and stedfastely vnto the ende the faythe whiche the spirite of Christe hath geuen vs, and also that glozious hope, by the which as the true natural sonnes of god, and brethren of Christe, we looke for the enheritaunce of heauen. For it shall nothyng auayle vs to haue heard the doctrine of the gospell, excepte we continually liue thereafter: Yea, the greater he is who dayned to speake vnto vs, the grieuouser shall our punishment be.

Wherfore (as the holy ghoſte ſaith) to daye if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hartes, as in the prouoking, in the daye of tempracion in the wildernes, wher yourc fa: The text.
thers tempted me, proued me, and ſawe my woorkes ſourtye yeare. Wherfore I was greued with that generation, and ſaved: They doe alwaye erre in their hartes, they ve- rely haue not knowen my wayes, ſo that I ſware in my wrath: they ſhall not enter into my reſte. Take heade brethien, leſte at any time there bee in any of you a frowarde harte ſub- iecte unto vnbellefe, that he ſhoulde departe from the liuyng god: but exhorte ye one ano- ther daylye, while it is called to daye: leſte any of you were harde harted thowoe the de- ceitfulnes of ſinne.

Wherfore ye muſt call vnto your remembraunce, what the holy goſt ſpea- keth in the miſtical pſalme exhorting the people to obey the voyce or wordes of god, leſte he being prouoked dooe grieuouſlye puniſhe them, and ſeclude them from the reſt and quietnes promiſed. To daye (ſayeth he) if ye wil heare hys voyce, harden not your hartes, as ye did when with your murmuring and rebellion ye prouoked God; what tyme he proued your patience in wildernes: where (ſayeth he) your fathers tempted me, as men that woulde proue whether I were he that were hable to puniſhe treſpacers of the lawe and offenders, and they felte my wrath, and ſuche as woulde not beleue my woordes, ſawe my woorkes, and that the ſpace of ſourtye yeres. ſo; ſo long were they ledde about in wilderneſſe what tyme they flyinge oute of Egypte, went vnto the lande where I promiſed them quietnes. Wherfore I was not contented with that nation and ſayde with my ſelfe: They doe alwayes erre in theyr hartes folowing theyr owne luſtes, neyther haue they knowen my wayes. And ſo; thys theyr dyſobedience I ſware in my wrath it ſhoulde neuer be, that they ſhoulde entre into the lande; wherein I promiſed them reſt from the trauayls of theyr iourneys. Ye haue heard, brethien, God thee a- nyng our fathers that they ſhoulde not come to the lande promyſed them, onleſſe they woulde continually obey his commaundementes. And we that thowoe baptiſme are deliuered from oure ſo;mer ſynnes and offences, are vndoubtedly departed out of Egypte, but yet we ſhall neuer come vnto the immortallitie promiſſed vs in heauen, excepte we ſhall continue in the obser- uance of fayth and chriſtian charite. If wee looke backe vnto Egypte ſo; ſaken, that is, if we fall agayne to the luſtes of oure olde lyfe, we ſhalbee ex- cluded from the felowſhpy and participation of the heauenly lyfe. Se ther- fore that there bee not in any of you a frowarde harte, and rebelling againſt the commaundementes of the goſpell, or ſubiecte unto vnbellefe, in ſuche wyſe that the ſame returninge agayne vnto the vices once ſo; ſaken, and the pynce of death the Denyll, departe awaye from thy lyuyng god. But rather with daylye exhortacions make ye one an other ſtrong to ſuffer continually the paynes and trauayls of thys lyfe, wherby God tryeth oure pure and trewe fayth ſo long as the tyme is called to daye, that is to ſaye, ſo long as we beate this mortall bodye, and as yet doe trauayll, as piſgrymes and ſtraungers in the wiſdomme of thys wo;rlde, alwayes in ſeopardye leſt any of vs werped with the ruffles of thys lyfe, bee ledde aſyde thowoe the allurements of ſinne from the iourneys begonne, lyke as in tymes paſte the hebrues our ſo; fathers beeyng wepy of theyr long trauailing longed after the fauoure of the pottes whiche they leſte behynde them in Egypte.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

The text.

¶ We are made partakers of Christ, if we kepe sure (vnto the ende) the beginning of the substance, so long as it is sayde: to day if ye will heare hys voyce, harden not your hartes as in the prouoking, for some when they herde did prouoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whome was he displeas'd fouertie yeres? Was he not displeas'd with them that had sinned, whose carcases were ouerthrowen in the desert: To whome swaie he that they should not enter into his rest, but vnto them that were not obedient: And we see that they could not enter in, because of vnderleite.

Certeynly we are grafted in Christe by baptisme and the profession of faith, but in such wise, that we may thow our owne default fall from him again: neyther shall we otherwise come vnto the enheritaunce of mortallitie promised vs, excepte we kepe sure, and constauntely vnto the ende the beginning and foundation of that felicitie, whiche was layed in vs by the gospell, still goyng forwarde in that was begonne, monyfyed thereto by thys saying whiche is continually spoken vnto vs: To day if ye wil heare his voice harden not your hartes, as in the prouokynge. For some when they hearde the Lordes voyce, did then by dysobeyng the same moue hym, prouokynge hys wyathe, and indignacion agaynst them. Howbeit al dyd not so whiche came out of Egypt vnder the conducte of Moses. And vnto these that were not disobedient it was geuen to come vnto the lande flowing with milke and hony: With whome was he displeas'd fouertie yeres? Was it not with them that had offended: howbeit these entred not into rest, but their carcases were ouerthrowen in wildernesse: with whome elles was he so muche displeas'd that he swaie they should neuer entre into the reste promised them, but with those whiche obeyed not the voyce of god: we see then that god was on both sydes trewe, who bothe perfourmed to the obeyent what he promised the, and to the disobedient that he manaced them with all. The obeyent came thereunto by their patience: the other could not entre in because of theyr vnbelype and incredulitie.

The. iiii. Chapter.

The text.

Let vs feare therfore, lest any of you, forsakynge the promise of enterynge into his rest, should seme at any tyme to haue been disapointed. For vnto vs is it declared, as wel as vnto them. But it profited nought of them, that they heard the word, because they whiche heard it, coupted it not with sayth. For we which haue beleued, doe entre into his reste, as he said: Euen as I haue sworne in my wrath, they shall not entre into my reste. And that spake he verely longe after the workes were made, and the foundation of thy world layde. For he spake in a certayne place of the seuenth daye on this wise, and god dyd rest the seuenth daie from all his workes. And in this place agayne: I her what not came into my reste.



¶ That Moses was vnto oure forefathers and elders, the same is Christe nowe vnto vs. And it was a worldely reste whereunto they hastened. We goe vnto the reste celestiall. Lette vs therfore feare to despise the voyce of God who daylye speaketh vnto vs by the gospell, lest lyke as many of them were throughe their owne defaulte disapointed of the hope and expectacion

expectation of the rest promised, so may it chaunce that some of vs also seme to haue bene disappointed, and not to haue attained thende of hys tourney. For vnto vs is shewed a muche moze blisful rest, and that by a moze certayn and faithfull ambassadour, then vnto them. But it auayled them nothyng that they receiued the promise of rest, and hitherto heard the voice of the lord, because they beleued not the same after they had heard it. For we which haue geuen credence vnto the lordes voyce, doe enter into the true rest that shalbe free from the vnquiete busines and troubles of worldly euils, as on the contrary parte, he denieth that they shal enter in, who haue not beleued, saying: As I haue sware in my wrath, they shall not entre into my rest, wheras neuertheless the first rest of god had already bene many yeres before, euen then; when at the creation of the worlde, his woorkes were persitely finished: and in a memoriall hereof, the Jewes dooe celebrate their resting daye. For scripture speaking of the firste reste whiche chaunced on the seuenth daye after the creation of the worlde, sayth: And the lord rested on the seuenth day from all his woorkes. And agayne in this place that I alleaged out of the psalme, he made mention of the seconde reste whiche refresheth the Hebrewes with the hartysow of the lande of Palestine, after they were weryed with long trauail and iourneyng, saying: they shall not entre into my rest.

Seeing therefore it foloweth, that some muste enter therinto, and they (to whome it was first preached) entered not therein for vnbeleues sake, he appointeth a certayn daye after so long a tyme, saying in David: (as it is rehearsed) this day if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hartes. For if Iosse had geuen them reste, then woulde he not afterwards haue spoken of an other day. There remaineth therefore yet a reste, to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, hath ceased also from hys owne woorkes, as God dyd from hys.

The terte.

With therefore it foloweth of these authoities, that God first entered in to his reste after he had made the worlde, and fewe entered into the seconde reste for they vnbeleues sake: and considering also that the promise shall yet be as voyde excepte some entre therein, soasmuche as our forefathers are excluded thereto, vnto whome reste was promised by figures and shadowes of the lawe, the which reste the same yet, vnto whome it was promysed, neuer entered into: there is againe in the mystical psalme an other day appointed by the mouth of David, after so many yeates that the lande of Palestine was possessed, the which day the sayed prophete calleth not the seuenth day, but this daye, as it hath bene nowe oftentimes rehearsed before. This daye if ye will heare hys voyce, harden not your hartes. For yf that Iesus the sonne of Dauid, (who beeing capitayne certayne of them entered into Palestine) had geuen trewe reste vnto the Israelites, God woulde not afterwards haue made mencion of an other day by the mouthe of David, els might they haue sayde: what newe reste speakest thou of vnto vs, sence we alreadye enioy the reste promised reygnyng in the lande of Jewrye. Therefore there remaineth a certayne other resting daye vnto the people of God: there remaineth an other reste, not in Palestine, but in the countrey celestially, whitherto we ha-
sten Iesu Christe beeing our captayne: but yet it shall neuer chaunce vs to attayne the same, excepte wee haue kepte here purely withoute violacion, the
resting

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

resting day of the gospell, abRayning from all the woo:kes of this wo:ldē. For whosoever hath entred into this true rest of God, hath nowe likewise rested from his woo:kes, as God rested from hys, after he had created and made the wo:ldē. For he is brought into that life, where there is no vnquietnes, neyther of labours, no: of griefes o: paynes.

The texte. Let vs study therfore to enter into that rest, lest eny man falle after the same ensample of vnbefese. For the wo:rdē of God is quicke and myghty in operacion, and sharper then any two edged swerde: and entereth through, euen vnto the diuiding a sundet o: the soule & the spirite, and of the ioyntes, and the marie. And is a discernet of the thoughtes and of the intentes of the herte: neither is there any creature that is not manifest in the sight of him. But all thinges are naked and open vnto the eyes of him, of whome we speake.

Therefore whyles we as yet trauail as straungers in the wildernes of this lyfe, let vs not stande still, let vs not looke backe, but with continuall endeuorze, and feruent desire, hasten to that true rest, whereunto our Capitayne Iesus calleth vs, and let it not be long of vs that any of vs fall by the waye as our forefathers dyd. For we shall haue no lesse punishmente then they had, if we doe likewise offende. Neyther is that punishmente litle to be regarded o: passed on, that Christ Iesu the wo:rdē of god, threareth with. For he is quicke and strong in operacion, and sharper then any two edged swerde, not onely cuttyng the membyes of the bodye, but also the moste inward affections of the mynde: insomuch that he cutteth a soondze the soule from the spirite, and disseuereth the ioyntes, and the marie, beeyng a discernet of the secreete thoughtes and ententes of our harte: and so trew is it that no parte of mans thought is vnknowen vnto him, that there is no creature at all neyther in heauen, no: vnder the yearth, whiche is not manifeste vnto his syght, but al thynges are naked and open to the eyes of hym, vnto whō we muste geue an accomptes of our lyfe. As in times paste the murmuring of the Heb:ues was not vnknowen vnto god, and as there neded no swerde to destroye them, but his onely commaundemente: so shall not that man be vnknowen vnto Christ, who after he hath once professed a christian lyfe, priuely souerth wo:ldly thinges, and doth not with pure minde and affeccion hasten vnto the reste promised.

The texte. Seeyng then, that we haue a greate hie priest which is entred into heauen (euen Iesus the sonne of god) let vs holde the profession of our hope. For we haue not an hie priest which cannot haue compassion on our infirmities, but was in all pointes, tempted, like as we are: but yet without synne. Let vs therefore go boldly vnto the seate of grace, that we maye obtayne mercie, and finde grace to helpe in tyme of nede.

Seeyng then we haue an hie priest who is verely great, Iesus Christ the sonne of god, whiche after the sacrifice made for our reconciltacion entred not into the moste secreete parte of the temple made with handes, but into heauen, to make the father mercifull vnto vs: Let vs abide stil in our professio folowing the way that he hath shewed vs, and hastening to those thynges whiche he hath promised. Let not his greatnesse feare vs, but his mercye rather encourage vs. Crueth it is that he dwelketh in heauen, but he was befoze a man conuersaunt in earth. Let vs not therefore ymagyne that we haue an hie priest which cannot take compassion on our infirmitie.

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He was tempted with all kinde of euils the which our lyce ys combred with all, howbeit he returned agayne into heauen a conquerour, to the intent þ we trustyng on hys ayde, shoulde not be wried or overcome with afflictions, but couragiously goe thozowe vnto the reste of everlastyng felicitie the which he came vnto. For he was for no other cause afflicted, beaten, spytte vpon, and crucified as an harmful person, where he was innocent and gyltlesse, but onely to pouрге vs (who are in very dede hurtfull caytiffes, and sinners) from al oure synnes and iniquities. He hath not chaunged hys affection towarde vs, so that we tourne hym not awaye from vs by oure owne blyuous behauioure and frowardnesse. Therfoze trustyng on hys mercy, let vs goe vnto hys seate, not hys terrible, but appeasable seate, which is ready to helpe, and not to destroye vs: let vs come boldly putting no doubt to obtaine mercy at his handes, wherby oure synnes maye be pardoned, and grace also geuen, that maye furnyche vs with heauenly gyftes, and helpe vs so ofte as uede shall require. For we muste desire no aydes but of hym onely, of whome we truste to haue our rewarde.

The. v. Chapter.

For euery hie priest that is taken from amonge men is ordeined for men, in thinges pertaining to God, to offer giftes and sacrifices for synne: which can haue compassion on the ignorant, and on them that erre out of the waye, for asmuch as he hym selfe also is compassed with infirmitie. And for the same infirmities sake, he is bounde to offer for synnes, as well for hym selfe, as for the people. And no man taketh honoure vnto hym selfe: but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

The text.



Furthermore it is an vsage amonge the Jewes that euery hie priest chosen from amonge men, be ordeined for thys purpose, þ in such businesses as chaunce betwene God and man, he as a mediatoure betwene both, maye make intercession for menne, in such wise that yf God be any thyng dyspleased wyth mennes offences, he may appease his wyach by giftes and sacrifices duely offered: the which hie priest for the dignities sake of hie priesthoope, canne in suche wise deale muche with God, that he is not yet free from mannes infirmitie, to the intent he maye be the readyer to take compassion on them, who haue sinned thozowe erreure and ignoraunce, in asmuche as he hym selfe is subiecte vnto the same infirmitie, in that he is of the selfe same nature that they be of. For suche are sooner sozred for other mennes euils and dyspleasures, as haue them selues learned mercy and compassion by the tastyng of lyke euils & aduersities: and he is gladder to reamedy other mennes erreurs and offences, which falleth oftentymes vnto hym selfe, or at the least wyse is in feopardie to fall: And for thys cause Moses priest ought as well to offer sacrifice for hys owne synnes, as he offereth for the peoples offences.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Nowe Chyist had so a commune nature with vs subiecte vnto paynes and death, that he was notwithstanding without all manour of synne. He had experience of payne who neuer knewe any synne. Furthermoze, accoꝝdyng to the ordinaunces of Moyses lawe, no man taketh vpon him and vsurpeth the honourable ministracion of hys priesthod of hys owne accoꝝde, but he onely taketh it in hande that is called thereunto by goddes commaundement, lykewyse as Aaron was called. For he semeth vnwoꝝthy of honour, whoso by reason of ignoꝝaunce ambitiously desireth dignitie: and that man is not meete for a rowme of ministracion, whych intrudeth hym selfe into the same

Such so Chyist also glorified not him selfe, to be made the hys priest: but he that saied vnto hym, thou art my sonne, thys daye haue I begotten the, glorified hym. As he saith also in another place: Thou art a prieste for euer after the order of Melchisedech. Whiche in the dayes of his synne, when he had offered by prayers & supplicacions, with strong crying and teares (vnto him that was able to saue him from death) and was heard because of his reuerence, though he were the sonne of God, yet learned he obedience, by those thynges, whych he suffered: and he being perfecte, was the cause of eternall saluacion vnto all them that obeyed hym: and is called of God an hys priest, after the order of Melchisedech.

The text.

And herein also Chyist gaue vs an ensample of a lawfull bishop. For he toke not vpon him of his owne accoꝝde, the glorious dignitie of an hys priest, but was allowed of hys father, who firste acknowledged Iesus to be hys true sonne, when he sayed: Thou art my sonne, thys daye haue I begotten the. And also he ordeineth him anon after a true and lawful hys priest when he sayeth: Thou art a prieste for euer after the orde of Melchisedech. We haue hearde howe he was ordeined. Nowe herken howe he was tempted, and proued. When as yet he had a mortall body in earth, he offered prayers and supplicacions vnto god the father, who could haue preserved him from the punishment of the crosse, excepte he had bene moze despyous to proude for mannes safetie by the death of hys sonne. He offered them with feruent affection, greate crying, and plentifull teares, and was hearde by reason of hys charitie and soueraygne dignitie with the father. He obeyed hys desyre. For hys will and desyre was not to escape the punishment of the crosse, but to procure vs soule health by hys death. He felte greate feare, he felte the torment & anguyshe of death, but the loue that he bare towardes mankynde preuailed. He was the sonne, and coulde haue obtayned any thyng of the father if he had desired it: but thus was it thought to be moze conuenient for our health, that he being afflicted with all manour of euils and aduersities, should geue vnto his a rule of perfite obedience euen to the punishment of the crosse. Do ye aske what auayled thys patience of oure priest? He was so proued and tryed euery waye, that nothyng shoulde bee lackyng in hym: he saued not onely hymselfe, but was the cause of saluacio to all that folowe thys ensample of obedience. For he obtayned of the father that all those whiche woulde be hys felowes in sufferynge afflictions, shoulde also be partakers with hym of hys kyngdome.

And for this sacrifice duly made, he was called of the father an hie p̄feste after the orde of Melchisedech.

Wherefore we would speake many thynges, but they are hard to be vnderstood: seeing ye are dull of hearinge. For when as concerning the same, ye ought to be teachers, yet haue ye neede agayne that we teache you the firste principles of the wyorde of God: and are become suche as haue neede of mylke: and not of strong meate for euery man that is fed with mylke, is inexpert in the worde of ryghtewesnes. for he is but a babe. But strong meate belongeth to them that are perfecte even those, which by reason of vie haue theyr wyttes exercised to discern both good and euill.

Nowe who was this Melchisedech, and howe conueniently he figured the sonne of God, I would largely entreate, but it shalbe very harde for me to declare all thynges vnto you, because your eares are not receyuable of this matter, but to weake to a waye with a sermon of suche length and difficultie. And herein I am constrained to requyre in you more diligence and seruent desyre to goe forward, who notwithstanding you haue so many yeares professed Christe, that for the quanttie and space of tyme ye should be teachers of other men, yet haue you neede to bee taught of me agayne the first principles, and as a man would saye, the I. S. C. of holy scripture, the whiche is wonte to be taught vnto those, as vnto children, who throught baptisme are borne agayne vnto the gospel: and you, whome I behoued nowe to be strong and stablished in euangelicall Philosophie, haue neede as yrelyke tender babes to be fed with the mylke of lowest doctrine: rather then be meete to receyue the strong meate of higher learning. As per your continewe skyll, and as one would saye, crepe in the historye of holy scripture, and ryle not vp to the more hydde and mysticall vnderstanding thereof. Nowe he that is such a one that he hath neede as yet to be nourished with mylke, is ignoraunt, and not strong ynough to heare the ryghtewesnesse of the gospel, whiche is not founde in thistoype, but in allegories. And therefore he is not receyuable of that preaching, whereby we are taught perfitte ryghtewesnesse, because he is as yet a babe in Christ, lately graffed in his body, in such wise that he may by litle a litle aspire to greater thynges.

Furthermore the strong meate of more profounde & mysticall vnderstanding, pertayneth to those whiche are growen, and become perfitte, euen to those, who by long and continuall practise haue theyr wyttes exercised to discern both good and euill. He that is a chyldre and nourished with mylke, lyueth verely, but yet he hath not gotten hymselfe that strength by custome and age, whereby he is able to choose out for himselfe of euery thyng the best, and loketh not to haue an other to put mylke, or chyldes meate chawed before into his mouth.

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The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The. vi. Chapter.

The text. Therefore leaning the doctrine that pertaineth to the beginning of christen men, let vs go forth vnto perfection, not laying agayne the foundation of repentance from dead workes and of faich towards God, of baptyng, of doctrine, and of laying on of handes, and of resurrection from death, and of eternall iudgemente. And so will we doc, if God permitt. For it cannot be that they which were once lychted, and haue tasted of the heavenly gyfte, and were become partakers of the holy ghost, and haue tasted of the good worde of God, and of the power of the worlde to come, yf they fal awaye (and as concealyng them selues crucifixe the sonne of God a freyde, and make a mocke of him) that they should be tented agayne by repentance.



herfore let vs, who ought nowe to haue ceased to be any longer children in christian Philosophie, omittynge the procelle wherewith the ignoraunt are wonte to be taught their first pynciples, go forth vnto perfection, and not euer to stande styll aboute the often laying of the foundation of repentance. For the fyrst degre vnto chystendome is, to be repentaunte for our former lyfe, and to forsake sinne. Next of all it is requyred, that we be taught that true innocencie a soule helth is to be hoped for of God: then forthwith that we be pouged by holy baptyse from the filchynesse of our synnes, and restored agayne vnto the state of innocencie: then that we receiue the holy gost by laying on of handes, and beleue the resurrection of the dead, to come, and also that last iudgement, which shal awarde some to eternall felicitie, and other some to euerlastyng paynes, and damnacion. It is enoughe for vs to haue once learned, once professed, and once beleued, these thynges. It shoulde be a thyng dysagreeable to all reason, if that after we haue been taught these forsaide pynciples, we so behaue our selues hereafter, that it be needfull to haue the same often tymes repeted and taught vs agayne, the which are taught for this purpose, that they shoulde be the foundation of the edifice whiche is to be buylded there on. But after we haue learned suche pynciples, it shalbe our partes to do our dilygente endeuoyre that we may by daily encrease of vertue a godlinesse, become great and perfite, a that the noble building of golde, syluer, and precious stones, of vertues and godly workes maye ryle, and be reared vp from the foundation once layed euen to the hyghest topp. It is our duetie to employe our dilygence to thys ende, that we maye fynishe the thyng we go aboute, if God be fauoyable vnto our attemptes, without whose apde mannes endeuoyre is able to byyng nothyng to effecte. After that we haue once begun this course or trade of lyfe, we ought not to turne our backes, nor to make resistance, not to retorne vnto the thynges once forsaken, but still to goe forwarde to greater thynges and of higher perfection. It were the greatest folye that myght be, for a manne to haue recourse vnto that thyng, whiche nether ought, ne can be repeted and ministred agayne.

For it is not possible for them which haue once forsaken the darckenesse of theyr former life, lychtned by the doctrine of the gospell, and now hauing theyr synnes forgiven thowre baptylme haue felt the free beneficence and greate liberaltie of God, and the gyfte of heauen, wherby he releaseth at once all our synnes, and geueth vs grace to lyue well: and afterwarde by laying on of the priestes hand haue bene made partakers of the holy ghost, by whome they haue begonne to beleue the blessed promises of euerlastyng lyfe, and now (as it were) to take a sayne & fogetaste of the power of þe wo:ld to come: it is not possible, I saye, for them, if they fall agayne thowre negligence into there former abominable lyfe, to be renued by repentaunce, the which thing hath once bene done already in baptylme, where as the olde manne is once cast away with his dedes, and a newe creature cometh out of the bathe or water. For suche as requyre to be renued agayne thowre repentaunce, after they haue often tymes fallen agayne vnto theyr former synfull lyuyng, what goe they els aboute, but, as concernyng them selves, to crucifie the sonne of God afresh, and make, as it were, a iestyng stocke or mocke of hym: He hath once died for vs, and we haue once dyed with hym in baptylme. He hath once risen agayne, and wyll neuer dye any moze. In semblable wyse muste we so rise agayne with him in a newe lyfe, that we fall not efrones into the dead lyfe once forsaken, and by that meanes prouoke God so much the moze vnto wyath & indignatio, as he hath the moze bountuously shewed hys liberaltie vpon vs. Our industrie and diligence ought to be answerable vnto hys liberaltie, and bounteous goodnes towardes vs. He hath put in vs certayne sedes of vertue and goodnesse, and therfore we also must do our diligence, that the same may growe and come to good.

For the earth which drinketh in the rayne that cometh off vpon it, and bringeth forth herbes meete for them that drinke it, receaueth blessing of God. But that grounde which beareth thornes & briars, is reioyed, and is nye vnto cursing: whose ende is to be burned. Neuertheles (deare frendes) we trust to se better of you, and thinges which accompany saluacion, though we thus speake. For God is not vnyghteous that he shoulde forget your worke and labour that proceedeth of loue: which loue ye shewe in hys name, which haue ministered vnto the fayntes, and yet mynister. Yea, and we desyre that every one of you shewe the same dyligence to the full stablisyng of hope, euen vnto the ende: that ye faynte not, but be folowers of them which thowre sayth and patience receiue the encrease of the promise.

For the earth which hath dronken in the rayne that falleth off vpon it, & hath brought forth herbes profytable to them that tyll it, is praysed of God for that it is not barayne, nor kepeth doune and strangleteth the seede, which is therein sowed, without any frute or profyte. But that grounde which after good seede receiued hath brought forth thornes and thyssles, is yuell, and nye vnto goddes cursyng, whose ende is not to be mowed downe, but to be burned. And these thynges speake I (dearly beloued) only to exhorte you, & not because the woordes I haue spoken of a baren earth may well be applied to you. Naye rather I haue conceyued a better oppynion of you then so, wherby I am ascertayned, that by goddes helpe you shall attayne saluacion, rather then be damned, albeit this similitude vled I because to styre vp

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

In you the desire of godly & chryſtian lyuing, leſt you waxing fainte againe, come by litle and litle to vtter confuſion. God wyll helpe you if you do your endeuoyre to attayne better thynges. For he is not vnkynde, nor vnrighteous in ſuche wyſe that he wyll forget your good dedes, & the labour ye haue ſuſteyned, not for renowne, or vauntage ſake, but for the loue of his name, the which loue ye haue ſhewed by dede ſelſe, who both hertofore haue miniſtered of your goodes & benefites vnto the ſainctes (by whom Chriſtes name is preached) and yet do miniſtre at thys preſent. Furthermoze I haue ſpoke theſe woꝝdes becauſe I am deſyꝝous that ye all (among whome there are many the which are fainter then I would they ſhoulde be) perſeuer in your doyngeſ, and not onely that, but alſo dayly profite moze and moze tyll ye come to perfeccion, that wher as I haue nowe a good hope of you, I may haue a ſure confidence and beleſe, percepying you ſtyll to go forwarde, and to be nothing nye the daunger that ſuch are in, as thoꝝow a ſlowthful faintneſſe fall agayne by litle and litle to theyꝝ olde lyfe, but rather to folowe the ſteppes of thoſe, who beleuing Chriſtes promyſes, and hauing ſure hope of heauenly rewardes attayne the euerlaſting of the lyfe immortall, which God hath promyſed vnto hys in y kyngdome of heauen. Suche as dyſtruſting goddes promyſes loked backe vnto Egypte forſaken, neuer came vnto the lande of becheſt, but Abꝝaham, who agaynſte all naturall reaſon conſtantly beleued goddes promyſes, obtayned that he taried for.

The text.

For when God made promeſſe to Abꝝaham, becauſe he had none greater to ſweare by, he ſware by hym ſelſe, ſaying: Surely, I wyll bleſſe the, and multiply thee in dede. And ſo after that he had taried patiently, he enioyed the promeſe. For men verely ſweare by him that is greater then them ſelues, and an othe to conſyꝝme the thyng, is to them an ende of all ſtrife. So God wylling very aboundantly to ſhewe vnto the heꝝyes of promeſſe, the ſtableneſſe of hys counſell added an othe: that by two inenutable thynges (in whiche it was vnpoſſible that God ſhoulde lye) we myghte haue a ſtroug conſolacion, whiche hitherto haue fled, for to holde faſt the hope that is ſette befoꝝe vs, which hope we holde as an ancre of the ſoule both ſure and ſtedfaſt, which hope alſo carryeth in into thoſe thynges which are wyth in the bayle, where the foꝝerunner is for vs entred, euen Jeſus that is made an hꝝe pyꝝell for euer, after the order of Melchizedech.

For God, to thentent hys promyſe ſhoulde be the better beleued; ſware an othe the which amonge menne is wonte to be comyted the ſureſt gage that canne be. He ſware by hymſelſe, becauſe he had none greater then himſelſe to ſweare by: He ſware in thys wyſe: I ſweare by my ſelſe, becauſe thou dydeſt thys thyng, and ſparedſt not thy onely begotten ſonne (Iſaac) for my ſake, I will bleſſe the, and multiplye thy ſeede as the ſtarrs of heauen, and the ſande that is in the ſea ſhoꝝe. Therfoꝝe after he hadde perceiued the conſtancie of thys olde manne, who ſticked not to ſley, euen hys owne ſonne in whome ſemed to be al the hope of his of ſpyꝝng and poſteritie, he confirmed that thyng by an othe which he promyſed befoꝝe. For he hauyng to do with man, condeſcended to the faſhions & manours of man. Men to aggrauate theyꝝ othe do ſweare by hym that is greater. And if they haue any doubtte or controuerſie amonge the ſelſes, the ſame is diſcuſſed & ended by the confirmation of an othe. And for this cauſe when God would notably declare the ſtableneſſe of hys counſell, vnto the heꝝyes of promyſe, he added an othe,

leſte

lesse any man myght suppose that he woulde lye, who had bounde hymselfe wyth two bandes, fyrst by promyse, and then by an othe: and to content also that we beeyng stablished in a sure belefe myght haue a strong consolacion in the aduersities of thys wo:ld: we, I saye, that haue not sette out felicitie in the pleasures of thys presente lyfe, but haue fled hitherto to obteyne the hope that is sette befoze vs in the wo:ld: to come, the whiche hope we holde fast in the meane tyme in the stormes of this wo:ld: as a stedfaste and sure ancre of the soule, not fastened in transito:ye thynges, but in heauen, so; that it stretcheth it selfe euen to those thynges that are wythin the bayle whereas no mutacion is, but all thynges are stable and euerlastyng. Thys is that inward part of the temple, (into the which Iesus Christe, runnyng thither befoze vs, and shewing vs the way, hath entred, to make intercession fo; vs vnto the father: who is made an hve priest fo; euer after the o:de, as I sayde in the begynnyng, of Melchisedech.

The vii. Chapter.

The text:

This Melchisedech kyng of Salem (whiche beyng prieste of the most hve God, met Abraham, as he returned agayne from the slaughter of the kinges and blessed hym: to whome also Abraham gaue tythes of all thynges) fyrst is called by interpretacion kyng of righteousness: after that, kyng of Salem (that is to saye kyng of peace) withoute father, without mother, without kynne, and hath neither begynnyng of dayes, neyther yet ende of lyfe: but is likened vnto the soune of God, and conuertyth a priest fo; euer.



Nowe I see the procelle of our wo:des hath broughte vs agayne to the mencion of Melchisedech, lette vs consider what a man he was, & by what reason he bare the fygure of our prieste. For wee reade that this Melchisedech kyng of the Citie called Salem, was an hve priest of the most hve God, the whiche Melchisedech mette Abraham in hys retourne from the slaughter of the thre kynges, and blessed hym fo; his valsaunte acte, vnto whome Abraham also gaue tythes of all hys goodes. fyrste Melchisedech by verrye interpretacion of name, is called the kyng of ryghteousnesse: then by the tittle of his kyngdome, he is called kyng of Salem, that is to saye, kyng of peace: who, as it is said, had neyther father, no; mother, no; pedigrew, no; begynnyng of dayes, no; end of lyfe. But of hym it is spoken (whiche verelye agreeth wyth the sonne of god) that he contineweth a prieste fo; euer. And so farforth euerye thyng agreeth verrye well wyth our hve prieste Christ, who o:rdained the kyngdome of ryghtuousnesse, who is the pynce of peace, who, as touchyng his deitpe had neither father in earth, no; mother, whose pedigrew no manne is hable to declare, who had neyther begynnyng, no; shal haue ending, whose priest-hood continueth fo; euer, and purifyeth all that beleue in hym vnto the wo:ldes ende. Nowe let vs consider the dignitie of the same Melchisedech and howe farre he excelled the priestes of Moses lawe. Abraham so greate a patriarke dyd not onley vouchesafe to receyue blesyng of hym after he had slepe the kynges, but also gaue hym tythes of the spyles.

Consider

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The text.

Consider what a man this was, vnto whome also the patriarche Abraham gaue tithes of the spoyes. And verelie those children of Leui, whiche receyue thoffice of the priestes, haue a commaundement to take (according to the lawe) tithes of the people, that is to saye, of theyr brethren, yea though they sprong out of the loynes of Abraham. But he whose kindred is not counted among them, receiued tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And no man denyeth, but that he whiche is lesse recepueth blessing of hym whiche is greater. And here men that dye, receiue tithes. But there he receiueth tithes, of whom it is witnessed, that he liueth. And to say the trueth, Leuy himselfe also, which useth to receiue tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loynes of hys father, when Melchisedech mette Abraham.

And the lawe of Moyses commaunded this, that they whiche came of the linage of Leui, shoulde succede in the ministracion of priesthoode, and receiue tithes, but of theyr brethren alonely, that is to saye, of the posteritie of Abraham: neither doeth the auctoritie and dignitie of the Leuites stretch any further: but Melchisedech where he was an alpaunt from the Jewische nacion, receyued tithes of Abraham, the very auctour of the whole nacion and blessed him, of whome according vnto Gods promise, the nacion of the Jewes shoulde issue. It is out of contouersie that the lesse receueth blessing of the greater. For whoso blesseth, doeth as it were, allowe by hys auctoritie that whiche is done. Nowe thaurtoritie to allowe is wont to remayne in the superiour, and not in him that is equall or inferioure. And in the tribe of Leui they receiued tithes, who were also mortall menne themselves, and by whose death the same auctoritie came vnto other. But it is sayde of Melchisedech that he liueth and continueth for euer in the preeminence of perpetual priesthoode. To conclude, whereas thaurtoritie to demaund tithes came from leuy the chiefe priest vnto other priestes, yet in that that Abraham payed tythes to Melchisedech, it semeth that Leuy also hymselfe was made bonde to paye tythes, notwithstanding that he was wonte to receyue the same of other. Therefore as they are counted of lesse auctoritie that paye tythes vnto Leuy: so was Leuy inferioure vnto Melchisedech vnto whome he gaue tythes. Some man wyll here saye: howe gaue he tythes who was not yet borne at what tyme Melchisedech mette Abraham? But forasmuche as the posteritie is in manoure counted to bee in the auctoure of the nacion, therfoze I sayed after this intellection, that Leuy, who came of Abraham, gaue tithes vnto Melchisedech.

The text.

I knowe therefore perfeccion came by the priesthoode of the leuites (for vnder that priesthoode, the people receyued the lawe) what needed it furthymore, that an other priest shoulde be called after the ordie of Melchisedech, and not after the ordie of Aaron? For yf the priesthoode be translated, then of necessitie must the lawe be translated also. For he of whome these thinges are spoken, pertaineth vnto an other tribe, of whom neuer man serued at the altare. For it is euident that our ordie sprong of the tribe of Iuda, of which tribe spake Moyses nothing concerning priesthoode. And it is yet a more euident thing, if after the similitude of Melchisedech, there arise an other priest, which is not made after the lawe of the carnall commaundemente, but after the power of the endles yfse. (For after this maner both he testifieth thou art a priest for euer, after the ordie of Melchisedech.) When the commaundemente that wente afore, is disannulled, because of weaknesses and vnpofitabilitie.

Yf so be that perfyte religion and holinesse dyd depende vpon the Leuiticall priesthoode, as it semeth vnto the Jewes, because the lawe was geue vnder Aaron who was of the tribe of Leuy, what needed then agayne an other priest to rise, who, as it is wryten in þ mystical psalme, should be said to be

be instituted not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedech: for seeing the auctoritie and fourme of the lawe is toynd with the fourme of priesthood, it is nedefull if priesthood be translated into an other fourme, that the fourme of the lawe bee lykewyse translated and chaunged. Certes the chaunging of the tribe sufficiently declareth, that the manour or fourme of priesthood must nedes be chaunged. For he whome the prophete of the psalme speaketh of, was none of the tribe of Leuit, but of that tribe wherof neuer man as yet serued at the aulter, because it is euydent that our lord Iesus sprung of the trybe of Iuda. But when Moses did institute the rite, and auctoritie of priesthood, he made no mencion of thys priesthoode whiche shoulde bee of the same kynred with the tribe of Iuda. Furthermore that the priesthood wherof the psalme speaketh is not the same manoure of priesthood that Moses priesthood is of, it doeth appeare more manifestly in that the prophete playnely addeth these woordes following: After the order of Melchisedech: signifying therby a priest vnylike vnto Aaron, and like to Melchisedech, to the entente we shoulde vnderstande, that there is no lesse difference betwene the one persone and the other, then is betwene the rite or ceremonie, and efficacy of priesthood. What meaneth this: after the order of Melchisedech: nothing els, but which doeth not sacrifice beastes prescribed by the grosse and carnall lawe, but can by heauenly grace bring vs to lyfe euerlasting. For the law did purifie the fleshe by washinges, and diuers purgacions: but grace purifieth our soules with a sacrifice of more strength and efficacy. For as Aaron continueth not for euer, so his priesthood was not euerlastyng, and as it is sayde of Melchisedech, that he continueth for euer, so hys priesthoode shall haue no ende. And that these thynges verely agreeth with Christ, the mystical psalme declareth, saying: Thou art a priest for euer after the order of Melchisedech. The priesthood that continueth, but for a season geueth place to the euerlastyng priesthood, and the mortall hys prieste geueth place vnto the immortall. Certes as the vpperfiter priesthood geueth place vnto the perfiter: euen so the vpperfite lawe geueth place to the perfiter lawe of the gospell, wherby the constitucions and lawes of Moses conteyned in the olde testament be (as it were,) dysannulled, for that they wete not of strength sufficiente, nor so profitable as they shoulde haue been.

For the lawe brought nothing to perfeccion, but was an introduction to a better hope, by the whiche we drawe nys vnto god. And therefore is it a better hope, because the thyng was not done without an othe. For those priestes wer made without an othe, but this priest with an othe, by him that sayd vnto hym. The Lord soware, and wil not repent. Thou art a priest for euer after the order of Melchisedech: And for that cause was Iesus a minister of a better testamente. The text.

For god woulde vs to be made perfit, but that lawe broughte nothing to perfeccion: neyther was it geuen for that purpose, yet was it not geuen in bayne: Cruelye it was geuen for a season, so the entente it shoulde be a certayne griece or staye to bring vs at the length to a better hope. For it promysed a fruitfull lande wherein they shoulde lyue a quiet lyfe, who had keppe the commaundementes of Moses lawe,

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

The law was grosse, and so was the rewarde, but thus god prouided for the grosse capacities of manne, that by sensible thynges they shoulde by litle and litle fall in vye with thynges spiritual. It was commaunded that they should not slepe, that they should not steale, that they shoulde pourge the handeling of carayne with certayne ceremonies: A lande was promised them wherein they should liue quietly a few yeres: but vnto vs heauen is promised, where we may liue in euerlasting ioye and felicitie, and in the meane while we are commaunded to loue euen oure very enemies. They: prieste when he was most deuoutly occupyed about sacrifice to make intercession vnto God for the people, went into the inwarde partes of the bayle: But our prieste entred euen into the very heauens, there to pleade our cause before god the father, whome we are made nye vnto by our ambassadour Christ Iesu, who is the head of the church. For it is not possyble that the bodye be awaye where the head is present: And by reason of suche an hie prieste, we haue a surer hope then the Jewes had by meanes of they: hie priestes, because they: priestes were ordained without an othe, and ours with an oth: the which god would haue made to thentente we shoulde haue a more sure confidence in hys promises, if the priest by whose mediacion we hope after the immortall felicitie promised vs, were by an othe approued an euerlastyng hie prieste and that of god, which elsewise can not lye. For thus speaketh he in the propheticall psalme: The lord swate and will not repent, thou art a priest for euer after the ordie of Melchisedech. Therefore looke howe muche difference there is betwene heauen and earth, betwene thynges that lasteth for a tyme, and thynges eternall, betwene those that are mortall, and such as are immortall, betwene worldlye thynges and heauenlye: of so muche a better testamente was our hie prieste Iesus made promiser, and so much the certayner promise, as the promise among men confyrmmed with an othe, is of more certaintye, then a simple promise.

The text.

And among them manye were made priestes, because they were not suffered to endure by the reason of death. But this man (because he endureth euer) hath an euerlastyng priesthood. Wherfore he is able also euer to saue them to the vtremost, that come vnto God by hym; seynge he euer lyueth to make intercession for vs. For suche an hie prieste it became vs to haue, which is hoie, harmlesse, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher then heauen. Which needeth not dayly (as vnder hie priestes) to offer vp sacrifice, first for his owne synnes, and then for the peoples synnes. For that did he once, when he offered vp himselfe. For the lawe maketh manie priestes, whiche haue infirmitie, but the worde of the oth that came sith the lawe, maketh the sonne prieste, whiche is perfecte for euermore.

Moreouer vnder the law of Moses it was needefull to haue manie priestes instituted, eyther because they shoulde execute the priestes office by tournes appoynted, eyther because that death woulde not suffer them alwayes to continue in they: ministracion, and by that meanes, the promise of reuymes chaunged was verye vncertayne of hys promise. But thys our prieste is one for all, and needeth not anye successoure, but by reason he endureth for euer, he hath a continuall priesthood.

wherefore

Wherfoze he is hable to bying those vnto saluaciō, whom he hath begun to saue, because they haue hym alwayes a redy prieste, by whose meanes they may come vnto god. For Christ liueth euē to thintēre that whensoever nede requireth, he may make intercessiō for his vnto god. For he hath not so offered a sacrifice that it should profite a fewe a short while, but that it should be auaylable to all men, and at al times hable to pacifye gods wrath. Therefore sens the lawe was heauenlye and perfite, it was meete that our hye prieste should also be such a one, that is to say, godly, without deceyte, vndefyled, farre seperate from the companye of synners, lyfted vp about all the hea- uens, who needeth not dayly to offer hye sacrifice as Moles priestes did, first for his own sinnes, and then for the peuples sinnes. For what manour of atonemakers were they, who themselves had nede to be made at one with god, vnto whome they made intercession for other menies offences & what manour a sacrifice was that, which for sundrie sinnes was of necessitie ofte tymes to be made againe? Our hye priest, who had no sinne of his owne, toke vnto him the sinnes of the whole world, and once offered vp a sacrifice for all menne, not a beaſt, but hys owne proper persone. For Moles lawe, as it was weake and vnperfite, so dyd it ordeyne suche hye priestes as were sub- iect to infirmite. But y^e worde of the othe that I spake of right now, which declareth that a better lawe shall succede in stede of the olde, ordeineth not e- uery man indifferently, but the very sonne of god a priest for euermore, re- dy at all times and mete to make intercession for vs, for that neyther death can take him away, neither any infirmite let hym, to be a conueniente and perfite beseecher for vs.

The. viii. Chapter.

Of the thynges whiche we haue spoken, this is the pith: that we haue luche an hye prieste The 10
as sitteth on the ryght hande of the seate of maiestie in heauen, and is a minister of holpe, thynges, and of the rewe tabernacle, whiche God pyght, and not manne. For euery hye prieste is ordeined to offer giftes and sacrifices: wherfoze it is of necessitie, that this man haue somewhat also to offer. For he were not a priest, if he were on the earth where are priestes that according to the lawe offer giftes which serue vnto the saumple, & shadow of heauenly thynges: such as the answer of God was geuen vnto Moles, when he was a- bout to finish the tabernacle. Take hede (said he) that thou make al thynges accordyng to the patrou whiche is shewed to thee in the mount.



Of the thynges whiche we haue so largelye entreated of befoze, the chiefe poynte and effecte is, that hereafter we haue not in admiracion Moles hye prieste, synce we haue one soe excellent in all poyntes that he sitteth on the ryght syde of the royall seate of god in heauen, to the entente he maye duely make, not those figuratiue sacrifices prescribed by Moles, but the trewe and heauenly sacrifices, and bee within the tabernacle,

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle.

I meane not that figuratiue tabernacle pitched of man, but in the secreete places of the true tabernacle pitched by almightie God, disseuering heauenly things from earthly. Furthermoze sens that euery hye priest is wonte to be ordeyned fo: this intente, that he may offer giftes and sacrifices to God, howe were it possible fo: him to be a lawful hye prieste whiche hath nothyng to offer: Nowe if it so be that an earthly priesthood were geuen to Christ after lyke manour as vnto other, then were he no priest, fo: that he neuer offered, ne offereth any of those sacrifices whiche are accustomedly offered of other priestes, acco:ding to the prescription of the lawe, the whiche sacrifices are nothing els but shadowes, and certayne figures of the heauenly temple and celestiall sacrificyes. Fo: whatsoeuer Christe did, euen in earth, because it was not done after the fleshe but after the spirite, & came from heauen and thither redeth), the same compared vnto the grossenes of Moses priesthood, is woorthely called heauenly. And this god seemeth to haue signified when prescribing vnto Moses a fo:me to buylde a temple, he speaketh in thys wise: Se thou make all thinges acco:ding to the patton whiche was shewed thee in the mounte. Fo: Moses saue with his spiritual eyes, an other holper manour of temple: an other manour of sacrificyes and priesthood, after the patton whereof, he drew out in the meane season a certayn grosse figure of thinges, till the tyme should come that god woulde haue shadowes geue place vnto trew thynges. Nowe is the same tyme already presente.

The texte.

But nowe hath he obtained a priesthode so much the more excellent, as he is the mediator of a better testamente, whiche was confirmed in better promises. Fo: yf that first testamente had bene such, that no faute coulde hane bene found in it, then should no place haue bene sought fo: the seconde. Fo: in rebuking them, he saith vnto them. Behold the daies come (saith the Lorde) and I will finishe vpon the house of Israel, and vpon the house of Iuda, a newe testamente: not lyke the testamente that I made with they: fathers in that daie, when I toke them by the handes, to leade them out of the lande of Egypte. Fo: they continued not in my testamente, and I regarded them not saith the Lorde. Fo: this is the testamente that I will make with the house of Israel. After those dayes (saith the lorde) I will put my lawes in they: myndes, and in they: hertes I will write them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teache euery man his neighbour, and euery man his brother, saying: knowe the lorde. Fo: they shall knowe me, from the leaste to the moste of them. Fo: I will be mercifull ouer they: vnihtousnes, and their sinnes and they: iniquities will I thinke vpon no more. In that he saith a newe testamente, he hath wone ouer the olde. Fo: that whiche is worne out and weered olde, is readye to vanishe awaye.

We haue an heauenly hye priest, and a priesthood worthie and conueniente fo: hym, so much moze excellent then this other priesthood, as the new testamente of the gossell excelleth the olde of Moses, and as the promises of the new be moze magnificate and greater then they: promises of the olde. There the bodyes were cleansed with the bloude of beastes: here soules are purified with the bloude of Christe. There a lande is promised: here are promised heauenly rewardes. And in this testamente our heauenly hye priest is a mediator betwene god and manne, after an heauenly manoure: If that first testamente had bene suche a one that nothing hadde lacked therein, as the Jewes dooe suppose, then should there no place haue bene sought fo: the seconde. Fo: it was but superfluous to adde any thing where al thinges were perfite.

Nowe God complayneth that that fyrste testamente was vnyprofitable, and prompseth a better, and of moze efficacie speakynge in the Prophete Ieremye on thys wyse: Beholde the dayes come, sayeth the Lorde, I wyl fynishe vpon the house of Israell, and vpon the house of Iuda a newe testamente, not lyke the testamente whiche I made wyth their fathers in the day when I toke them by the handes to leade them oute of the lande of Egypte: because they contynued not in my testamente, I againe fo; my part regarded them not, sayth the Lorde.

For thys is the cottaunte that I wyl make wyth the house of Israell, sayeth the Lorde, when I wyl not graue my lawes in stoncs, or bokes, as hath bene proued in bayne, but wyl put them into theyr myndes, and wyrt them in their heartes. And I wyl be verely theyr God, and agayne they shall be verely my people. Neyther shall they gyue my doctrine by hande one to an other, in suche wyse that euery man shall be compelled to enstruete bys neyghboure, and euery one his brother sayinge (knowe the Lorde:) because that not one-lye then a fewe Jewes, but all the people of the worlde shall knowe me from the leaste vnto the greatest, that I wyl be made mercyfull

thyntercessyon of my sonne, and fo;gyue theyr synnes and

trespasses, neyther wyl I any moze thynke vpon

theyr wycked dedes. Ye haue hearde bys

wordes who promisseth a newe testament,

because the olde was vnyprofytable.

Nowe that whiche is called newe,

that is to say, spiritual, signi-

ficth that the olde, that is

to wytte, the carnall,

muste be taken

awaye,

and dysantuled. Elles coulde not thys testa-

mente be called newe, excepte that whiche

was before, were wo;ne oute and

waren olde. Nowe that that is

wo;ne oute, and waren

olde, is, vs; gone,

forasmuche as it

draweth by ly-

tle a lytle to

an ende.

The. ix. Chapter.

The olde testamente then had verely ordinauntes, and scraynges of God, and worldly holynes. For there was a forerabernacle made, wherein was the lyght, the table, and the shewbrade whych is called holpe. But wythin the seconde hable was ther a tabernacle, whych is called holpest of all, whych had the golden sculer, and the Arke of the testamente, ouerlayde rounde about wyth golde, wythin was the golden pot wyth manna, and

The text.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Setons todde, that sproug, and þ tables of the Testament.ouer the Arke were the Cherubins of gloire, shadowyng the seate of grace. Of whyche thynges we can not nowe particularly speake.



Some man wyl here saye: what, was the religion of the olde temple a vayne religion? Nay not so. In tymes past that olde temple also, whose religion is nowe at an ende and gone by the succession of euangelicall veritie, had certayne approued customes, and prescribed ceremonies the whiche made an vtwarde shewe of iuste and petyte liuyng. It had also a certain holynesse, but the same was a worldly holynesse for that it stood in vtwarde thynges and visible. Of the whiche kynde of holynesse there seemed also a great deale to be among the Iaynyms and Gentiles. But the buyldyng of the temple was suche, that one parte therof was counted moze holpe then an other tyll a man came vnto that parte whiche seemed holpest of all. For in the fyrste place there was made a tabernacle wherin were kepte with much reuerence the lycht, the table, and the seuen holye loaves, whiche they called the shewe bread, by reason they were wonte to be set out for a shewe on the holy table. And this parte of the temple they called onely holpe because it was so seuered from vnholy thynges, that it was yet verpe farre from those thynges whiche were accounted mooste holpe. But wythin the seconde bayle whiche parted this parte of the temple from other, there was an other tabernacle that for the excellencye of holynesse was called holpest of all, and in thys were conteyned certayne of the holper sozte of relikes, as the golden Censer, & the Arcke called the Arcke of the testamente, couered rownde aboute wyth plates of golde, hauynge in it the golden potte, (wherin Anna was reserued a monument of an aunciente myracle wrought what tyme, the Hebrewes beyng very hongry, there rayned a newe kynde of meate downe from heauen) and Aarons rodde the whiche by a wonderfull myracle neuer harde of befoze bare leaues after it was cut from the stemme, and budded out into flowers, wherof afterwarde came Almons. There were in it also the tables called the tables of the testamente, bycause in them were the commaundementes grauen with Goddes syngre.ouer thys were ymages with wynges called Cherubynes representing the Hatellie and gloire of God whyche ouershadowed the mercy seate with their wynges, all the whiche thynges had a certayne signification of holper thynges afterwarde disclosed by the ghospell. But it were to long to speake of euery of the pzempses particularly, and to shewe what was meante and signified by the same. It shalbe sufficient for vs to compare the effecte of pythe of the whole matter to the priesthode of Chryste.

The text.

When these thynges were thus ordayned, the priestes went alwayes into the first tabernacle, which executed the seruice of the holie thynges. But into the second went the hie priest alone once euery yere, not wythour bloude wherby he offered for hymselfe, and for the ignorances of the people. Wherewith the holy ghost this signified, that the way of holpe thynges was not yet opened, whyle as yet the first tabernacle was standynge. Whyche was a similitude for the tyme then present, in whyche were offered gyftes & sacrifices, that could not make the mynster perfect, as petynyng to the conscience, wyth only meates and drinckes, and diuers washynges and susteynages of þ fleche, whiche were ordayned vntyl the tyme of reformation.

Nowe

Nowe when the temple was thus deuoyded, and the holy reliques bestowed in their places, all priestes indifferently whiche executed the ceremonies belonging vnto the sacrifices, entred dayly into that fyrst tabernacle. But into that seconde, whiche was very holy, went the hie prieste (who was chiefe in dignitie among the priestes) alone once euery yeare and no oftener, and that not wythout the blood of a beaste, whiche he there offred first for his owne synnes, and then for the synnes of the people commytted by error and ignoraunce. By the whiche thynges, as it were by certayne darke fygures, the holy ghooste signified that at that tyme there was as yet no open waye or entraince vnto those places whiche are in verye dede holpe, and haue no manour of earthly infection. For while the hie byshoppe entred into the most secrete parte of the temple, and as yet that fyrst tabernacle was standyng, whiche hadde a synnetytude of those tymes in the whiche the people were by certayne grosse ceremonies kepte (howe so euer it were) in the Jewyshe religion, lest they shoulde haue fallen to greater enormities, there were certayne grosse and vulgare ceremonies done by the comen sorte of priestes in the sayd tabernacle. Gyftes were offered, beastes were kyled and offred vp in sacrifice, the whiche thynges had so a certayne similitude of purificacion, that they coulde not yet make thole persitly cleane (as touching the conscience and soule wherby God esteemeth vs) who vsed them, althoughe, as concernyng the bodye and estimation of the worlde, they semed to giue some cleanness and puritie. For whatso euer was there done, pertepned chiefly vnto the bodye, for that it stode in chopse of meates & drinke, whereas in verye dede, meate neyther purifieth, nor defileth the soule: and stode also in diuerse washynges and pougations of the fleshe, whiche were not instituted for this intent that they shoulde gyue manne persyte ryghtuousnesse, but bycause the people shoulde by these rudimentes and fyrste principles, fall in bye by lytle and litle with true religion, and by shadowes bee brought to veritie, and made recepuable of better thynges, whiche shoulde be opened by the doctrine of the gospell, when tyme shoulde come. Here haue ye heard the effects of all the religion, by reason wherof the Jewes do stande so muche in their owne conceytes. Nowe let vs compare the dignitie of our hie priest with these foresayde thynges.

But Christe being an hie prieste of good thynges to come, came by a greater and a more perfecte tabernacle, not made with handes: that is to say, not of thys buldyng, neyther by the blood of goates and calues, but by his own blood he entred in once into the holy place, & founde eternal redemption. For if the blood of oxen & of goates, & the ashes of a yong cowe, when it was sprinkled, purifieth the vncleane, as touching the purifying of the fleshe: howe much more shall the blood of Christ (which through the eternall spirit, offered hymself wythou spot to god) pouerge your conscience from dead workes, for to serue the lyuinge god?

The text.

For Christ being an hie priest, a promiser, and auctour, not of copozal purificacion, neyther of the good thynges of this world whiche haue an ende, but of euerlasting and heauenly good thynges, entred, not by the waye wrought with mennes handes, but by an other tabernacle not made wylth handes, that is to saye, not of this buldyng, the whiche as menne doe sette it vp, so can they pull it downe agayne, but by verie heauen, entred (I say) into the places which are verely holy, and verely farre from al infection of mortalitie not bynynginge wylth hym the bloude of goates and calues therewith to pacifie Goddes wrath, but his owne precious bloude whiche he shed for vs in the aulter of the

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

croffe, wherewith he redemed not one nation onelye, but all mankynde from all synnes, and that not one yeare, but for euer vntyl the worldes ende, so that they tournynge from their former mystryunge, knowe Christ, and as muche as in them lyeth folowe hym in their lyfe and conuersation.

For what comparison is it to compare a domme beaste vnto Christe bothe God and man? If so be that the bloud of Oxen and Goates, or the brent ashes of a younge Cowe sprynkeled vpon vncleane persones clenseth them, as touchynge a certayne carnall and figuratiue puritie and holynesse:

Howe muche moze then shall the bloude of Christe, who not by corporall fyre, but thowhe the eternall spirite desirous of mannes saluation offered, not a brute beaste, but hym selfe a pure and vndefyled sacrifice vnto almyghty God the father, purifie, not youre bodyes, but youre conscience from these woikes whiche in very dede byynge death vnto the soule: Hys death delyuereth vs from endlesse death, and hys mooste pure spirite purifieth our spirite whiche was befoze vncleane. In bothe purifications is bloude, but yet is there a greate difference. In bothe is death, but an vnequall death.

In bothe is a spirite, but the one is farre vnylike the other. For what thyng foer was there done by shadowes and certayne fygytes, the same Christ accomplished in dede.

The text.

And for this cause is he the mediator of the new testamente, that through death which chanced for the redemption of those transgressors that were vnder the first testamente they whych are called, myght receiue the promise of eternal inheritance. For where as is, a testamente, there must also (of necessity) be the death of hym that maketh the testamente. For the testamente taketh auctorite when men are dead: for it is yet of no valur, as longe as he that maketh the testamente is aliu, for whyche cause also, neither the first testamente was ordeyned without bloude.

Bycause that he who in the olde testamente made intercession and was a mediator betwene God and men broughte not the people to the perfect state of innocencie, therefore Christe succeeded in his rowme, and became a newe mediatoure of a newe testamente, to the intent that all synnes taken away thowhe his death (the whiche by that first testamente coude not be abolyshed and taken away, but remainned, in suche wise that they broughte vs oute of the fauoure of almyghty God) not onely the Jewes, but also all tho whosoever haue bene called to Christes fellowship, maye nowe thowhe the doctrine of the gospell receiue the promise and hope of the eternall enheritaunce. For wheresoever this worde testamente is hearde, there must nedes be the death of hym that maketh the testamente, elles shoulde it be no testamente, or yf it were, it were of none auctorite. For the death of the testatoure maketh the same of auctorite, whiche hath not as yet sure strengthe nor is ratified so longe as the sayde testatoure is aliu. Because it lyeth in hys power to altre it yf he wyll: Wherefore sozasmuche as that olde testamente hadde also the name of a testamente, it was not ordeyned without bloude and death, but of a beaste, and suche a beaste as ellwise shoulde haue perished.

The text.

For when Moses had declared all the commandement to all the people according to the lawe, he toke the bloud of calves and of goates wyth water and purple woolle, and ysope, and sprynkeled bothe the boke and all the people saying: this is the bloude of the testamente, which God hath appoynted vnto you. Moreover, he sprynkeled the tabernacle, with bloud also, and all the ministeryng vessels. And almoste all thynges are by the lawe purged wyth bloude, and wythoute shedynge of bloude is no remission.

For

For as it is reade in the booke of Exodus, when Moyses had read all the lawe of God vnto the people, and declared vnto them what reward they shoulde loke after for keepyng the same, and what punishment they shoulde dreade of if they dyd not regarde it accordingly, to thentent the coucnaunt made betwene God and the people shoulde be confirmed, he toke a cuppe, and therein myngled the bloude of Calues and Goates wyth water, and purple woll, and spynkled bothe the booke oute of the whiche he read the Lordes commaundementes, and lykewyse all the people with yfsope, sayeng: This is the wytnessyng bloude, and confirmer of that testament whiche God hath commaunded you to kepe: And was not onely contented thus to doe, but spynkeled also with bloude the tabernacle, and all the holy vessels therein whiche they bled in sacrifices. Lykewyse in all other rites and approued customes what thinges so euet were purified accordyng vnto the prescription of Moyses lawe, were purified with bloude. Neither was there anye remission of synnes but by sheddyng of bloude.

It is nede then, that the similitudes of heuently thinges be purified wyth such thinges: but that the heuently thinges themselves, be purified wyth better sacrifices then are those. For Christ is not entred into the holie places that are made with handes (whiche are similitudes of true thinges) but is entred into very heuen for to appeere nowe in the sight of god for vs: nor to offere himself often as the hye priest entred into the holy place euery yere wyth strange bloud, for the must he haue often suffred sence the worlde began. But now in the ende of the worlde, hath he apereed once to pur synne to syght by the offering vp of hymselfe. And as it is apoynted vnto all men that they shall once dye, and than cometh the iudgement: men so Christe was once offered to take awaye the synnes of many, and vnto them that loke for hym shall be apere agayne, withoute synne vnto saluation.

The text.

And truly it was conuenient that suche thynges as in earth represented the similitude and shadowe of heauently thynges, shoulde be done with suche manour of grosse and carnall purifications. But when veritie was once come to lyght, then was it mete that the heauently sacrifices them selves shoulde be made with better oblations, and cause a truer puritie. For, as I haue sayde, euen all that Christe did in earth is heuently. For truly he entred not in to the holie places made with handes, whiche are rather supposed holie then be holy in dede, and maye be tourned vnto a prophane vse, and were nothyng els but certayne shadowes and figures of thynges that were verely holie, but entred into verely heauen where as dwelleth the God immortall wyth hys holy angels, befoze whom he as a lesul Byshoppe maketh intercessyon for all mennes synnes, purchasyng hym selfe fauourable audience wyth hys owne bloude, whiche of his mere and free charitie he shedde for vs: and that dyd he with so effectuell a sacrifice, that it shall not be nedefull for hym euery yeate to do the same agayne, as the hye priest of the olde testamente entred in to the mooste secreet parte of the temple yeately. Neither is it anye matueyll that the sacrifice made by the hye prieste of Moyses was not of lyke efficacye, sence he was bothe subiecte vnto synnes, and offered by a beastes bloud, and not his owne.

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If Christe had bene such a hyeprieste, then lythe there hath so manye ages and yeares begonne agayne sence the creation of the worlde, he shoulde of necessitye often tymes haue offered by a sacrifice lyke as the priestes of the olde testament dyd. Howe was he such a one, that it was sufficiente for hym once to offre by hymselfe, and once with the sprinkeling of his own blode, to take awaye the synnes of all ages vntill the worlde ende. And that was done, not from the begynnynge of the worlde; but nye the ende of the same, when it was openly knowen to euery man, that al the world was defyled with synne, and that there was no remeady but of God onely, by cause it shoulde manifestly appeare howe effectually a ppest, and of what greate vertue and power he was; whō with one sacrifice poured so greate an heape of synnes, and lefte behynde him a ready and an ealse remedye, whych was, that the same sacrifice shoulde be sufficient for al menne, tyme oute of measure, that woulde not make them selves vnworthye therof. For he toke vpon hym, not only their synnes who manye yeares byfoze put hope of saluatyon in hym; but also theyrs who would manye yeares after beleue his ghospel.

Wherfore there is not why the worlde shoulde loke after an other ppest, or an other sacrifice to poure synnes, but as it is appoynted to al men that they shall once dye without hope to retourne agayne into this lyfe wherein we oft tymes fall, and oft tymes are poured agayne: and as there is nothyng looked for after euery mannes deathe, but that extreme iudgement wherby endelesse rewardes shalbe adjudged bothe to good and badde; so lyke wylle Christe (who dyeng once was offered by for all the world, takyn vpon him, as moch as in hym laye, all mennes synnes, by cause he woulde be punished for all) woulde haue nothyng remayne after this lyfe but that last iudgement wherein he shall appeare agayne vnto the world, not as befoze lyke a sacrifice appoynted to be slayne, or lyke a worker of wylschete, and one worthy of punishment, but as a glorious persone and one that knoweth no maner of synne: he shall saue, appeare to their blysse and saluation, who beynge nowe punished thozow his death, perseuer in good and vertuous lyuynge till he come agayne, not to be offered by, but a iudge desired of the good, and dreadfull to the wicked.

The .x. Chapter.

The text.

For the lawe (haunge the shadowe of good thinges to come, & not the very fashion of the thinges themselves) can neuer with those sacrifices which they offer, yere by yere, continually make the conuerses therunto perfect. For woulde then not those sacrifices haue ceased to haue bene offered, by cause that the offerers our nedged shoulde haue had no moze conscience of synnes? For certaynes in those sacrifices, is there no mention made of synnes euery yere. For the bloud of oxen and of goates cannot take away synnes.



Whethermore the cause why the hyepriest of the olde testament coulde not do the lyke, was by reason that that lawe forasmuche as it had not the truly and true fashion, but onely a certayne shadowe of good thinges, whiche rather signified somewhat, then brought anything to effecte, could neuer with her vsuall sacrifice of beastes (all though they were by those priestes continually offered yere by yere) make suche perfite as came to pacifie God wylly vneffectuall oblations by the mediacion of weake priestes.

For yf perfeccion myghte haue bene attayned thereby, Moulde not the same sacrifices once offered, haue ceased to be offered any moze: Now in these sacrifices when so euer they be offered agayne, there is mention made a freshe of the former synnes, whiche thynge playnly declareth that they haue no confydence in one sacrifice. Els for what purpose dyd they euerie yere offre agayne newe sacrifices, if one had so purged from all synne, that no conscience therof had remaine in those whiche had once offered and bene purged: For seing that synne is the maladic of the soule, and not of the bodie, a grosse and bodily sacrifice, as is the bloude of Oxen and Goates, can in no wyse take awaye the dyscase of the mynde. The onely spirituall and heauenly sacrifice of Christe is able to doe this thynge sufficientlye the whiche thowse sayth and Baptisme so taketh awaye at once all the synnes of our former lyfe, be they neuer so manye, neuer so heynous, that there remaineth no feare, or remyse in conscience, so that we wyl only beware that we fal not agayne into our olde enormities, and detestable dedes. For soo fatte wyse is it from the, & with that God was made mercifull by reason that such sacrifices were oftentimes offered, that beinge rather offended therwith he required some one effectuall sacrifice whiche Moulde contynue for euer.

Wherefore, when he cometh into the world he sayeth: Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not haue: but a body haste thou ordayned me. Burnt offeringes also for synne hast thou not allowed. Then sayd he: I am here. In the begynnyng of the booke it is written of me that I should do thy will, O God. About, when he sayth: sacrifice and offering, and burnt sacrifices & synne offeringes thou wouldest not haue, neither hast thou allowed them (wiche yet are offered by the lawe) then sayd he: I am here, to do thy will O god: he taketh a waye the firste, & stablisheth the latter, by whiche wyll we are made holye euen by the offering of the body of Iesu Christ once for all.

For the Sonne as it were about to come into the worlde to make God the father mercifull vnto the same with the sacrifice of his owne mooste precious bodie, speaketh vnto hym in the mysticall Dialme on this wyse: Sacrifice and offeringe thou wouldest not haue, but a bodye haste thou ordayned me: Burnt sacrifices, and other sacrifices accustomed to pouge the peoples synnes, thou haste not allowed. Than sayd he: Loe I am here, that in the begynnyng of the booke I am signified to be a sacrifice. I am here to do thy will, O God. When therefore he sayeth in these wordes: Sacrifice and offeringe, and burnt sacrifices, and sacrifices for synne thou wouldest not haue, whether allowedest thou any of these sacrifices, whiche were wonte to be offered accordyng vnto the prescription of the olde lawe: And immediatly addeth: Loe I am here to obey thy will O God, and to offre a sacrifice pleasaunte and acceptable vnto thy mynde: in these wordes, I haue, he taketh a waye that firste prycthode as displeasaunte vnto God, to thentent he maye stablyshe the later therwith to satisfye Goddes wyll and pleasure.

What was this wyll of God, who thus lotheth the lawefull sacrifices of the olde testamēt, and greatly desizeth a newe kynde of sacrifice: Forsooth it was this, because it sought his free goodnes towards vs, that his heauenly sonne (that is to saye Christe) shoulde take vpon hym mannes bodie, and dyeng for the synnes of the whole worlde, pacifie all manne by one sacrifice duely made, of their synnes, in suche wise that there nedeth not hereafter anye other

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Other blodie sacrifices.

The text.

And every pyest is ready dayly ministring and offering often tymes one maner of oblation wyche can neuer take away synne. But this man after he hath offered one sacrifice for synnes, is set doune for euer on the righte hande of god, and from henceforth tarieth till his foes be made his foote stoole. For with one offering hath he made perfecte for euer them that are sanctified. The holy ghoſte himself also beareth vs record, euen when he saide befoze: thus is the Testamente that I will make vnto them: After those dayes (sayeth the Lord) I will putte my lawes in their heartes and in their myndes will I write them, and they: synnes and iniquities will I remembre no moze. And where remission of these thynges is there is, no moze offering for synne.

Whosoever is a priest of the olde testament, is conſtrayned dayly to minſtre, and oftentymes to offer the same sacrifices agayne, whiche howe ofte soeuer they be offered can neuer cleane take away synnes, so that it is an endlesse busynesse to bothe partes, that is to saye, both to the offerer, and to the priest by whom the oblation is made. But Christe thonly sacrifice once offered for the synnes of al them which haue, do, or wyl beleue his promyses, sitteth now on the right hande of God the father, tarryng for nothyng els but that whiche onely remaineth, that is to saye, to haue all the membyes of his bodye assembled together, and vntyll at the length it come to passe, accordyng as it is promised in the psalme, that his enemyes (who are rebelles agaynst the ghoſpel) be made his foote stoole. But in the meane season he nedeth not to offer himselfe agayne for vs, because that with one oblation he hath sufficiently perfited all those for euer, whiche haue deserued to be sanctified thozowe faith, in suche wise that none of our olde synnes can be layed vnto oure charge. That I saye now, euen the holy ghoſte hym selfe witnesseth speakyng by the mouth of the prophet, and shewyng long befoze that the same thyng shoulde be, whiche we see alreadye come to passe. His wordes are these: This is the testamente that I will make vnto them after those dayes (sayeth the lord) when I shall put my lawes in their heartes, and write them in their myndes, and their synnes and iniquities will I remembre no moze, muche lesse then will I take vengeance for the same. Furthermoze after that al synnes be once pardoned for euer, what nede is there of the Jewishe sacrifices, whiche were made to pouрге and take away synnes.

The text.

Seeing therfore brethren, that by the meanes of the blode of Iesu we haue libertie to entre into the holy place, by the newe and lyving way whych he hath prepared for vs, thozough the vayle (that is to say, by his fleshe:) And seeing also that we haue an hepyest whych is ruler ouer the house of God, let vs drawe vpp with a true hert in a sure faith, sprinkled in our hertes & the euil conscience put away & washed in our bodyes with pure water: let vs kepe the profession of our hope, without wauering (for he is faithfull that promises) and let vs consider one another, to the intent that we may prouoke vnto loue, & vnto good workes, not forsaking the felowship that we haue among our selues, as the manner of some is: but let vs exhort one another, and that so muche the moze by cause we see that the day draweth vpp.

Seeing therfore, brethren, that the conscience of synnes is raven away whych feared vs to make intercession to almyghtie God, and that we haue an assurance gauen vs to entre into the holy place, let vs trustyng vpon the most sacred bloud of Iesu, which he shedde for our reconcilacion, and thereby opened vs a waye and entranche farre dyuerse from the olde waye, that is to saye, a freshe, newe, lyvinge, and euertlastyng waye, whiche after it is once opened can neuer be shutte agayne, the whiche waye he beganne vnto vs entering

tryng in fyrst of all thowhe the vayne, that is to saye, by his fleshe wherewith his Godhed was couered for a tyme in this worlde, and after the same fleshe was assumed and taken vp into heauen, heuenly thynges were opened: And sythe we haue a greate pypst promysed of God after the order of Melchisedech, whom God hath made ruler ouer all his house, that is to saye, ouer the Church catholyke, the whiche church he gouerneth not as a minstre, but as thautour and Lorde thereof, lette vs also in the meane tyme goe whither Christe hath opened vs the waye: let vs goe, I saye, not with bodely feete into a temple made of stones, but with a pure harte, and a very sure belefe to obtayne our petition entre into the heauenly temple, but fyrst spynkled, not touchyng the body with the bloud of a beast, but touchyng the mynde and spirite with the bloud of Iesu Christ, & thereby purified fro the conscience of oure olde synnes, & furthetmore washed in our bodyes too with the pure water of Baptysme that scourseth and washeth awaye all the fylthe of the soule: Then remaineth it that we perseuer in the thynges we haue once begonne, and kepe stedfastly, and wpythout any wauerpyng, the hope of immortall lyfe whiche we haue professed in Baptysme, trustyng in this one thyng, that God who promysed is saythfull and sure of his promys, and cannot deceaue if he would so that we contynue styll in sayth.

Furthetmore bycause we are made the members of one bodye let vs cleaue together by mutuall charitie and agreement, consideryng with our selues how muche eche of vs hath profited in the profession of the ghospell, not bycause to enuie hym who hath ouergone vs, or to despise hym that is ouergone or left behynde, but to prouoke to charitie and good woorkes by good example and exhortacions gyuyng one to an other. The whiche thyng shall come to passe, if the goyng forwarde of oure brother do make vs more despyouse to lye well and vertuoufly, and also yf we perceyunge anye to be slacke in goyng forwarde, doe then with a brotherly carefulnes pypke him forthe to better thynges, alwayes reioysyng at them whyche goo before, and makyng moche of those that do their diligence, not sufferyng any one to perishe from our flocke by reason he is forsaken, as some (occasion seruyng thereunto) are wont to leaue of from their good begynnynge: But let one of vs by al manoure of wayes and meanes possible styre and encourage an other to go forthe to the ende in that we fyrst beganne. And thys thyng ought ye so muche the moze earnestly to doe, bycause ye see that the daye of the Lorde is at hande, whiche will gyue euery man rewardes accordyng vnto his desertes, and leaue no place or oportunitie to amende what hath bene done amisse, but whatsoeuer hath bene done shall be then examyned with exacte iudgement. And suche trespasses as are committed by erreure or frayltie of man shall easely be pardoned.

For if we sinne wilfully after that we haue receyued the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for synnes but a fearfull lookyng for iudgement, & by silent fyre, whyche shall deuoure the aduersaries. He that despyseth Moyses lawe, dieth wpythout mercy vnder two or thre wytnesses: howe muche sorer (suppose ye) shall he be punished whych treadeth vnder fote the sonne of god: & countereth the bloude of the testament, where with he was sanctified as an unholy thyng, and doeth dishonour the spytte of grace: For we know hym that hath said: it belongeth vnto me to take vengeance, I wil recompence sayth the Lord. And agayne: the lorde shall iudge hys people. It is a fearfull thyng to fall into the handes of the lgyunge god.

The force,

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But after we haue once knowen the truth by the ghospel beyng taught, what we must hope after, and what we ought to eschewe, and what rewarde good menne shall haue, and what puell, yf we then wyllyngly fall agayne into deadly synnes, whiche Christ hath once washed away with his p̄cious blood in that he dyed once alonely, and neuer wyl dye agayne, thert remaineth then no Hooste or sacrifice for vs whiche haue so esteones fallen to oure olde lyfe and synfull lyuyng, wherby our synnes maye be freely released agayne thozow baptysme. What then remaineth? Forsoth a certayne dreadfull loking for of the laste iudgement, and forthwith a cruell and tourmentyng fyre whiche in reuēgement of the goodnes of God despised, shall deuoure the aduersaries. Thynke you that he shall scape unpunished that hath despised the lawe of the ghospell? The more mercifull and beneficiall that God is, the more punishment shall he haue, who wyllyngly and wyttyngly hath mocked therewith. He mocketh with the gospel, whiche after he hath bene once called to the numbꝛe of the chyl-dren of God, wylfully putteth himselfe into the numbꝛe of the Devils ser-uauntes. If there were so greate punishment among the Jewes, that who-soeuer obeyed not the p̄iest teaching the commaundementes of Moyses lawe, that is to wytte, yf he that was commaunded to absteyne from swynes fleshe dyd notwithstanding of a selfe wyl or dysobedient towardenes eat the same, and afterwarde, beyng firste conuicted by two or thre witnesses, was done to death without merce: Howe muche greater punishment then deserueth he to haue, who treadeth vnderfote not anye one p̄iest of lowe estimacion, but Je-sus Christ the sonne of God? Treuly he treadeth hym vnder fote, whoso despi-seth his so greate benefite: whoso counteth, I save, not the bloude of a beaste, but his holye blood wherwith the newe testanient was sanctified, as an vnhol-ly thyng, specially the same bloude wherwith he was once pourged and made cleane from all hys olde synnes: synallye whoso dishonoureth the spirite by whom he hath obteyned the grace of the ghospell, by cause that spirite once put away thozowe hys bypoulnesse, he trayterously gyueth by the temple of God vnto the dyuell. Do we therefore assure our selves that we shall escape unpunished bycause men do not by and by take punishment on suche as doe swarue from the puritie of an euangelicall and christian lyfe? We knowe hym that hath sayde: It belongeth to me to take vengeance: I wyl recompence sayth the Lorde. And agayne in an other place: The Lorde shall iudge the people. Let not any synner flatter hym selfe, and thynke that he is oute of dan-ger yf he escape the handes of a man reuenger. No man can escape the handes of God. But it is a dreadfull thyng to fall into the handes of the lyuyng god. Howe the more that ye were to be praised when ye fyrste began to profess the ghospell, the more shame and rebuke shall it be for you to fall agayne into your former lyfe.

The text.

Call to remembraunce the dayes that are passed, in the which after ye had receiued light, ye endured a great fight of aduersities, partly whyle all men wondered and gased at you for the shame & tribulacion that was doon vnto you: partly whyle ye became chas-paignions of them which so passed their time. For ye became partakers also of the afflic-tions which happened through my bondes, & toke in worth the spoyling of your goodes, and that with gladnes, knowyng in your selves, howe that ye haue in heuen a better and an enduringe substaunce. Cast not away therefore your confidence, wherby hath a greater recompence of rewarde.

And lest that come to passe, cal vnto poure remembraunce the tymes passed,
in the

In the whiche after ye had receiued lichte by the doctrine of the ghospell, and saythe ye couragiouslye endured dyuerse fyghtes of aduersities in hope of the lyfe to come: partely whyles all suche as hate Chyistes doctrine wondered and galed at you for the shames and dyspleasures which were done vnto you: partely whyles thozowe the instigation of chyrstian charitie, ye of your owne accozd became partakers both of the shames & afflictions that were done vnto other chyrstians, or els Apostles, who (the world vtterly contemned) lyued after the rule of the ghospel. For ye were wylingly partakers of the afflictions and shame whiche amonge the wycked people semed to happen by reason of my bondes and emprisonment, and were soye for an other mannes sozowe, & couēted an other mannes iniurie yours. Acyther dyd you so farre forthe onelye declare your selues true chyrstians, but also gladly suffered the spoylyng of youre goodes, declarng vndoubtedly by dede selse that you knowe and beleue howe there are better ryches layde vp for you in heauen whiche neyther the pryue thefe, nor the violent robber can bereaue you of: yea rather those ryches increase by the losse of worldly gooddes whiche we suffre for the name of Chyrste. These dedes dyd wpth good cause put you in assuraunce and fyrm belefe to obteyne Chyrstes promyses. For very greate rewarde are owynge to so strong a fayth, and vndoubtedly God, who is bothe rightuous and bountefull, wyl trewly paye them, but in tyme conuentent. Nowe is the tyme to fyght, hercafter the crownes shalbe gyuen. In the meane season ye haue nede of patience to thetent that after ye haue constauntlye obeyed the wyll of God, ye maye receaue the crowne of euetlastyng glozpe promysed you.

For ye haue nede of patience, that after ye haue don the wyll of god, ye myght receiue the promyse. For yet a very lytle whyle, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tary. But the iust shall lyue by fayth. And yf he wythdawe hymselfe, my soule shall haue no pleasure in hym. It is not we that wythdawe our selues vnto dampnacion, but we partayn vnto fayth, to the wyngyng of the soule.

The texte

As yet the daye is not come when that after batayle taken awaye and ended the rewarde shalbe gyuen: howbeit it is not farre of: And our Emperour, who when he ascended vp into heauen promysed that he woulde retourne vnto vs agayne, wyl come, and not longe tarye. In the meane while the ryghtuous shal lyue by his fayth, be he neuer so much afflicted, neuer so much lawghed to skorne, neuer so muche deade, yet by hopynge for the promyses shal he vpholde his constaunt mynde. Howbeit yf he abyde not styll in fayth, but thozowe extreme desperation wythdawe himselfe from the profession of the ghospell, in him my soule shall haue no pleasure. But God forbiddeth that by reason of our mystruste, we wythdawe our selues from good begynnynge vnto damnacion. Yea rather we haue professed fayth, and therein wyl we contynue, to thetent we may wyne the lyfe and saluation of our soule, accozdyng vnto the counsell of Clape, saying: The ryghtuous shall lyue by fayth.

The xi. Chapter.

Fayth is a sure confydence of thynges whych are hoped for, and a certainte of thynges whych are not sene. For by it the elders obrayned a good reporte. Thzough fayth we vnderstande that the worlde was ordayned by the worde of god, and that thynges whych are sene, were made of thynges whych were not sene. By fayth Abell offered vnto God a more

The texte

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more pléteous sacrifice then Cain, by whych he obtained witness that he was righteous, god testifying of hys gyftes: by whych also he beyng dead, yet speaketh.

There is nothyng that so greatly byngeth good men into fauoure of God, as faith and sure belefe on God. For it is an argument of a mynde whych hath conceyued the best opinion y^e maye be of God, to doubt nothyng of his wordes, though the same appeare no where to the senses of man, neyther can be proued by mannes reason. The comon sort of men iudge those thynges bayne, & mosse lyke vnto dreames whiche where they be nowhere in dede, are only conceyued of the mynde by hope, & thynketh it an extreme folpe to beleue that suche thynges are true as can in no wyse be shewed vnto the eyes. Certes this sayth whereby the ryghtuous man lyueth when o-ther do perishe, is not a certayne common lyght belefe, but a substanciall and sure foundation of those thynges whiche can not be perceyued neyther by the senses, noz argumentacions of man: neuerthelesse sure hope so representeth the same vnto the mynde and soule, as though they were manifestly scne, and holden with the handes, and perswadeth those thynges whych of themselves are inuisible, to be mosse certayne and sure, not by mannes reasons, but by a sure belefe towarde God the authour thereof. The Jewes put confydence in theyr workes, but this is the onely thing which maketh vs alowed & well beloued of God, & not vs alonely, but furthermoze yf a man wyl make rehersall from the creation of the worlde, he shall fynde that all oure forefathers and elders, who are muche remembred for theyr laudable vertue and godlynes, deserued that they attained to by reason of their commendable sayth.

First of all, are we not bounden vnto sayth that we haue sure perceurance that all this whole worlde with all thynges therein conteyned was created with the worde of God, and the onely commaundement of the maker: For who is able other wise to perswade, that of inuisible thynges were created & made thynges visibill: or els that thynges which are, were made of thynges which are not? The philosophers reasonyng as men, supposed y^e the world was neuer made, neither had any begynnyng more then had the workeman and creatour hym selfe. But this which could neither be sene, ne can be proued by argumentacion of mannes witte, we do as firmly beleue as though we sawe it, ascertayned by holy scripture, which declareth that the world was made by the commaundement of God, who (as we know right well) is able to do all thynges, and can not lye. Abell first of all men deserued to haue the name of a righteous manne, and was therefore the more to be prayed, bicause not beyng prouoked by the example of any other, he was innocente and saythfull to godward. But what thing was it that made him more dearly beloued of God then his brother Cayn? Forsoth faith, whereby he wholly hanged of him, whereas Cayn lyke a man saythlesse, and not contented with those thynges which the earth brought forth of her owne accorde for the fode of innocency, tilled the ground. They both offered sacrifices vnto God of their owne propre goodes, but God onely accepted the sacrifice of Abell, bicause the innocent man trusted to his goodnesse with a true harte, and gaped not after the commodities and profites of this world, but hoped for a rewarde of his vertuousnes in heauen. Therfore he deserued not by his sacrifice, but thowgh sayth, that almyghtie God imbracyng his gyftes, dyd

by fyre sent down from heauen testifie that he was righteous, and by reason of this most goodly testimonie, he is now after so many thousand yeares so much renowned and spoken of, of all menne, that beyng deade he seemeth euen to liue and speake. He was slayne to his brotherwarde what tyme he was murdered fautelesse, but he was not sleine to God, vnto whome his bloude as yet cryed vengeance from the earthe.

By faith was Enoch translated, that he should not see death, neither was he founde: For God had taken hym away. For afoze he was taken away he obtrayned a good report, that he pleased God. But without faith it can not be that anye man should please hym. For he that commeth to God, must beleue that God is, and that he is a rewarder of the that feare hym. The text.

Neither was it any whit preiudiciall vnto godlye Enoch that he was begotten of a wycked father. For holye scripture wptnesseth of hym that he was conuersant & familiar w god, euen whē he lyued in earth, because he pursued by faith, not those thinges which are sene, but such thinges as are not sene & is to wytte, eternall thinges & heuenlye: & for this cause he was taken by aliue to those thinges that he loued, & deliuered frō death. For he liued after such a sort befoze he was taken from the felowshyppe of men, that he seemed rather to lyue in heauen then in earthe, and seemed also vnwozthye to dye for that he hadde committed nothynge death woꝛthye, to thentent men shoulde firste learne by his example, that the open way to immortalitie is by faith and innocēt luyng. Therfoze he was taken awaye bycause he pleased God. But he pleased hym chiefly by fayth, without the whiche no man pleaseh hym, haue he els neuer so many good dedes. For whosoener desyꝛeth to be brought in fauour with almyghtye God, must first of all beleue that God is, who can do all thynge, and wylleth what is best. Then muste he also beleue that God careth for the woꝛlde, and that by hym neyther the godly, whiche settyng at noughte the visible good thynge of thys woꝛlde searche after God inuibile, are defeated of their rewardes, be they neuer so muche afflicted and persecuted in this lyfe: neither the wicked persones shall lacke their punishmentes, although they seme here to lyue in prosperitie and haue the woꝛlde at will. Therefore Enoch maye thanke his fayth for this (I wote nere whether I maye call it gloꝛy or felicitie) that he is taken awaye from the felowshyppe of men, and lyueth with God.

By fayth Noe, beyng warned of God, eschued the thynge whych were as yet not sene, and prepared the arke to the sauynge of his household, through the whych arke he condemned the woꝛlde, and became heire of the righteousnes which is according to faith. The text.

Howbeit Noe shewed a moze notable example of faith towards God, euen then this, who when he was foꝛwarned by the mouthe of God, howe it shoulde come to passe that all kyndes of luyng creatures in earth shoulde be destroyed thozow inundation of waters, and saue no apparent argumentes or reasons wherby the saying of God mought be pꝛoued, bycause the element was fayre and cleare, and the people that were feastyng & makynge bydeales without any care lawghed to heare these manassynge woꝛdes of the pꝛophecie: Yet surely beleuing that it would so come to passe as God had sayde befoze it should happē, ordeyned an Arke, wherby he both pꝛeserued his own household, & cōdened other mē which so mistrusted & woꝛdes of god, & they lawghed hym

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to skoyne as a madde man when he was a frampnge the sayde Arke agaynste the commynge of the floude. Neyther was he alonely preserued from the floud, but also succeeded in the prayse of Abell and Enoch his elders, who are muche tenowned for that rightuousnesse whiche thozowe faith maketh a man commendable before God.

The text.

By faith Abraham when he was called, obtayned to go out into a place, whych he shoulde afterwarde receyue to inheritaunce: and he went out not knowynge whether he shoulde go. By faith he remoued into the lande of promyse, as into a strang cōtrey, when he had dwelt in tabernacles: & so dyd Isaac & Jacob herce with him of the same promise. For he looked for a cite hauing a foundation, whose builder & maker is god.

Nowe howe ofte dyd Abraham gyue an example of a notable faith towards God: first where as there is nothyng moze pleasant to man then hys natyfe cōtrey, yet when almyghty God comaunded hym to forlake the same with his affections, and flyt into an vnkowne lande, he made no tarieng, but obeyed streight wayes the voyce of God, and that prouoked by no other mans example, noz put in hope and comfōrte by any probable reasons, how it shoulde so come to passe, that after he had forsaken suche landes and patrimonie as he was bozne vnto, he shoulde possesse by enheritaunce, I wot nere what lande, wherof as yet he neyther knewe the name, noz situation. So sure a truste and belefe had he, that all shoulde come to passe what so euer God had promysed. It proceeded of the same fayth that when he came into the lande promysed of God, and the matier went not forwarde to hys mynde neyther wyth hym, noz his sonne Isaac, noz his nephew Jacob (where as yet then heritaunce of thys lande was not promysed to him alone, but also to his offsprynge and posteritye) because he was constrayned oftentimes to fyght with his enemyes, and Isaac had muche busynes and trouble with the Philistians, and Jacob was dyuen thence by Elau his brother into the cōtrey of Mesopotamia, fro whence after he was at the length retourned agayn, he was sayne to bye a litle pece of ground to pytche his paullion in: yet all these thynge moued not Abraham a whyt to haue any mistrust in God, who promysed the lande: neyther complayned he that he was a bannysed man, and not an enheritour, neither regarded he those thynge whiche are sene in earth, but heauenly thynge whiche are not sene otherwise then in the eyes of fayth. For he perceiued that this was not the lande that God meante of when he made the promes, the whiche lande he set so lytle store by, that he thought it not necessarie therein to buyld neither house or towne but kepe himselfe and his, in tabernacles, as a straunger whiche anon shoulde remoue to an other place. What dyd he then loke for when he sawe that these promyses were not perfourmed: forsoothe he looked for an other cite whiche was stable and perpetual, from whence he shoulde netter be dyuen out agayne, farre vnylike these cyties whiche men do buyld and destroye, the maker and buylder wherof was God himselfe.

The text.

Through faith Sara also receiued strength to conceiue and be with child, and was deliuered of child when she was past age, because she iudged hym faithfull whych had promysed. And therfore sprang there of one (euen of one whiche was as good as deade) so many in multitude, as are starrs of the skie, and as the sand the which is by the sea shore innumerable.

Moreouer

Howeuer his wyfe Sara when she had bothe an olde man to her husband, and her selfe was so stricken with age, that her matrice lacked natural strength to drawe mannes seede vnto it, and retayne the same, dyd neuerthelesse conceiue, and was deliuered of Isaac, mistrusting the strength of nature, but yet giuing credence vnto God, who by an angell promysed her a man chyld the nexte yeare. She gaue no care to nature reclaming and barking to the contrarie, but onely had a sure belefe that God coulde not lye. God promysed Abraham a posteritie equall in nombze to the starrs, and the sande of the sea shore, and yet by the course of nature was there no hope of yssue at all. That notwithstanding, he had no mistrust. And therfoze of this one olde man beyng barayne by reason of age, there yssued a posteritie so many in numbze, as are the starrs of the skye, and the sande in the sea shore. For he looked for sonnes and nephewes, not after the kyndred of blood, but after the imitation of faith, wherby al we are the offspring and posteritie of Abraham, whiche do beleue the promyses of the gospel. Therfoze not onely Abraham, but also all his true posteritie were of suche constaunt fayth, that very death bereaued not them therof.

These all dyed according to fayth when they had not receyued the promyses: but sawe the same farre of, and beleued them, and saluted them, and confessed that they were straungers and pilgrymes on the earth. For they that say such thinges, declare that they seeke a countrey. Also if they had bene myndeful of the countrey, from whence they came out, they had leasure to haue returned agayne: but now they desire a better (that is to saye) an heauently. Wherefoze God hymselfe is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a cytie.

The text.

For all these dyed when they as yet had not the promyses performed, but sawe them a farre of by fayth, and beleued them: and for greate desyre saluted them, puttyng so lytle trust in this lande, wherein no man maye lyue anye long space, that they confessed them selves straungers and pylgrymes, not onely in Palestine, but in the whole worlde. For oftentimes they call this lyfe a pilgrimage and straunge dwelling. And Dauid in the mysticall Psalme confesseth himselfe to be a pylgryme on the lande as all his forefathers and elders were, and yet reigned he in Palestine, and builded there a citie. And verely this countrey y was compassed about with very narrowe lymites, and a great parte thereof came not to the possession of the Hebrewes the offspring & successours of Abraham, bycause they coulde not driue out the olde possessioners: neyther dyd Moyles entre into the same, but behelde and saluted it a farre of from a mountayne, when he was aboute to passe out of the worlde, and yet had he no mistrust of the promyses. Therefore sence they confesse themselues to be pylgrymes, they sufficiently declare that they desyre and long for a countrey. What countrey seeke they after vnto whom all this worlde is an exile and banishment? They forsoke their countrey of Chaldep, the whiche, if they had so sore longed for it, was not so farre of, but that they myghte haue had conueniente recourse thider at pleasure. Therfoze they longed not for that, but for an other countrey better then it, wherein they myghte liue for euer, quite exempte and deliuered from all greuous sorowes and paynes of this wretched worlde. This was that heauently countrey, into the whiche God called them out from theyr owne, for the loue wherof he wylled them so to lyue in this worlde, as though they were not therein. And for this cause almyghtie God, where he is the maker & soueraigne Lorde of all men, calleth himselfe speciallye the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

For he is properly the God of those that haue put their whole trust, and all aydes of felicitie in him. And vnto suche hath he prepared, not an earthly, but a celestiaall citie in the whiche they reygne alwayes in blysse with him, for whose sake they contemned all thynges.

The texte.

By faith Abraham offered vp Isaac when he was proued, and offered hym being his only begotten sonne, in whom he had receiued the promises. And to hym it was sayd: in Isaac shall thy sede be called: for he considered that God was habie to rayse hym vp agayn from death. Wherefoze receiued he hym also for an ensample of the resurrection. By faith vpd Isaac blesse Jacob and Esau, concernynge thynges to come.

Was not this also a notable example of fayth in Abraham: that when God tryng howe vnfaignedly he trusted hym, commaunded hym to offce vp in sacrifice his sonne Isaac, where as he was hys onely sonne, and he in whose name the posteritie was promysed (for these were the wordes of the promysers: Thy sede shall be called in Isaac) yet he without further delaye vpd as he was comaunded to do, not reasonyng here with himselfe on this wise: Of whom shall I haue posteritie if I slep hym in whom onely resteth all the hope of my posteritie: But he considered this in his mynde, that God who made the promysse coulde not lye, and that he was able yf it pleased hym, to reyse his deade sonne the multiplie of his stocke euen from death: And because he beleued the resurrection of the dead, it was therfoze gyuen him to byng home his sonne againe with him beyng as it were restozed to lyfe, notwithstanding he was as much as in the father laye, dead, who euen then represented by a certayne figure the resurrection of Iesu Christe to come. This was also a manfeste example of a mynde haupng a great confidence in God, that when Isaac laye on hys death bedde, and had not as yet receyued the felicitie promysed of God, yet was he bolde to promysse the same to Jacob and Esau his sonnes, when he blessed the both, foze seynge both they: lyues, and the contrarie rewarde that eche of them shoulde haue. So quicke of lyght is faith, that she seeth euen those thynges as present whiche are farre distant from the bodely senses.

The texte.

By faith Jacob, when he was in dyng, blessed bothe the sones of Joseph, and bowed hymselfe toward the toppe of his scepter. By faith Joseph when he dyed, remembred the departynge of the children of Israel, and gaue commaundement of his bones.

It came of lyke faith that Jacob at the hower of his death, blessed all the sonnes of Joseph, not ignoraunt what was to come, who crosseynge hys armes layed his right hande vpon Ephraim beyng on his left syde, and his lefte hande vpon Manasse standynge on hys tyghte syde, nothyng doubtyng but that woulde come to passe, which the holy ghost tolde him before shoulde happen. But this faithfull olde man saw a greate deale farther, what time he kydinge the toppe of the sceptre of his sonne Joseph, worshypped Christe in hym, who shoulde haue soueraigne auctoritie & rule ouer all men, of whō the said Joseph falsely accused & betrayed of his brethren bare the figure. Neither dyd Joseph growe out of kynde, & become vnlike his auncestours in faith. For when he shoulde departe this world in the land of Egypt, he foze sawe how it shoulde come to passe by gods helpe (the whiche thing as then seemed nothing lykely) that the Israelites shoulde remoue out of Egypt to come vnto the lande promysed of God: and so true is it that he doubted not herof, that he gaue then a commaundement of the translating of his bones to the same place.

of S. Paule to the Hebrewes? Cap. xi. Fol. xxi.

By fayth Moses when he was bozne, was hyd thre monethes of his father and mother because they saw he was a proper chyld, nether feared they the kinges commaundement.

Moreouer Moses, when he was newly comen into the world was preserved by the fayth, of his parentes. For when the kynge had commaunded that all the men chyldren bozne of the Hebrewes should streyght wayes be done to death, his father & mother after they had bewed the childe (who seemed anon as he was bozne to be marked to do some greate and notable feate, euen by the verie towardnes and lykelyhod that appeared in his countenaunce) suppolyng it to be an acceptable pleasure vnto God that it were preserved for the common weale of the people, contemned the kynes commaundement, & hyd the sayde childe thre monethes in their house: that done, they put it in a lytle cofer, and layde it oute vpon a ryuers banke, nothyng doubtyng but God woulde preserve the poynglyng whom he had endued with so greate grace: to conclude, they feared more to displease God then the kynge, because they perceyued that suche as lyue well and vertuouslye, can not, howe soeuer the worlde go with them, lacke they? rewarde.

By fayth Moses when he was great, refused to be called the son of Pharaos daughter, and chose rather to suffre aduersite wyth the people of god then to enioye the pleasures of synne for a season, and esteemed the rebuke of Christe greater riches then the treasures of Egypt. For he had respecte vnto the rewarde.

The text.

Howbeit the parentes of Moses deserued to haue the prayse hereof, lyke as this was his owne propre commendation, that after he was shotte by wardes mannes state, and chosen of Pharaos dawghter to be her sonne, he refused the honourable kynted of the bloud Royal, hauyng leuer to confesse himselfe to be an Hebrew bozne, & so to suffre comon persecution with the people of God, then by wycked dissimulation to enioye the comodities and pleasures of thys worlde, reckenyng it to be muche happier riches then all the Egyptians treasures, at that tyme to suffre the rebukes of aduersities for the preservation of the people, thereby to figure Christ, who in tyme to come should suffre greater euels for the sauetic of his nation. Finallye he contemned that he myghte haue had, and was sure of, and with the eyes of fayth regarded those thynges onely whiche are farre from the senses, puttyng his affyaunce in God, who suffreth not the vertue and goodnes of mā, to be disapointed of worthy rewardes.

By fayth he forsoke Egypt, & feared not the scarcenes of the kinge. For he endured, euen as though he had sene hym whych is inuisible. Through fayth he ordayned the passage and the effusion of bloude, lest he that destroyed the first bozne, shoulde touche them.

The text.

The same Moses puttyng his trust in the ayde of God, boldly attempted thynges of muche greater enterpryse then these. For he stiked not to flye oute of the lande of Egypte, and thence to conuey with him the people of God, nothyng fearyng the wyath of the fierce tyraute. He contemned the kynge whom he sawe wth his eyes. He regarded not the threathnynges of so myghtye a Prince, whom he sawe in armes pursupnge his nation the Israelites at the heles, and readie to sleye them. Neyther did he with lesse boldnesse and courage of wynde trust vpon the inuisible socours of the inuisible God, then yf he had openlye sene him with hys eyes. Moreouer of the same fayth came it, that when he vnderstode how it would come to passe, the reuengyng Kynge would raunge

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

thozowe the whole lande of Egypte, and sey all the fyrstborne, he was nothing afrayde of his people the Hebrewes, vnto whom in those daies aboute the tyme of the same destruction, he ordeyned the annuall ble or ceremonie to cate the Paschall Lambe, with whose bloude they sprynkeled the thraholde and haunse of the doze, with both the postes of the house, and trustyng vpon this sygne feared not them selues in the myddes of the slaughter of the Egyptians.

The texte.

By faith they passed through the red see as by drye lande, which when the Egyptians had assaied to do, they were drowned.

Anon after when the reed sea letted the Hebrewes in their speng, by vertue of lyke sayth it deuided asonder at the stroke of Moyses rodde, and lefte suche a wate in the middes, that they passed therby as wel as by drye lande. And by this meanes all the people puttyng their truste in God, fled awate safe and without any harme. But when the Egyptians beeyng rashe and ouer haste thozowe wraathe, were entred therein, by and by the waters closed together, and they all were drowned.

The texte.

By faith the walles of Jericho fell downe after they were compassed about seuen dayes.

What thyng made in tymes paste the walles of Jericho, after they were seuen tymes compassed aboute, on the seuenth daye sodaynely to fall without any violence of engyns at the sounde of the priestes trompettes, & the crye or shoute of the people, in suche wise that all the Hebrewes who enuyroned the towne, had entraunce made the neuery man in the place where he stode: was it not the faith of the capitayne Josua and the people? he was thozowly perswaded with hym selfe that god was able to do all thynges, and that the thyng woulde vndoubtedly come to passe whiche he had promised to do.

The texte.

By sayth the harlotte Raab pershed not with them that were disobedient, which she had receiued the spies to lodgyng peaceably.

Furthermoze, it was also a notable example of sayth that the harlotte Raab, whiche had befoze receyued the spies to lodgyng that were sent vnto the Citie by the Hebrewes, after she perceyued howe that people was dearly beloued and in the fauoure of God, she was better wyllynge to prouide for them with the daunger of her owne lyfe, then to get thanke of the wycked Citizens, and therfore had she this rewarde for her faith, that she and her familie onely were preserued from death, because they shuld not perishe wth the, which trustyng to their own strength beleued not that god would destroye their Citie at his pleasure.

The texte.

And what shall I more say? For the tyme will be to shote for me to tell of Gedeon, of Barathe, and of Samson, and of Jephthae, of Dauid also & Samuell, & of the prophets: which through sayth subdued kyngdomes: wrought ryghteousnes: obtrayned the promyses: stopped the mouthes of lions: quenched the violence of fire: escaped the edge of the swerde, out of the wekenes, were made strong, were valiant in fight, turned to flyghte the armys of the alpenes, the women receyued their dead raysed to lyfe agayne.

But seyng that among so many wonderfull actes of oure forefathers and elders there was none at all notably achued wout the aide of faith, for what purpose shoulde I stande in the particuler reherfall of them all? I shoulde sooner lacke tyme, then examples if I would go forth with the stories of the Caprayne Gedeon, who trustyng vpon the aydes of God feared not with three hundred men to set vpon the hoooste of the Madianites excedyngly wel furnished

shed with men, armoure, and all other habilimentes of warre: And in conclusi-
on dyscomfited and put to flight a great multitude of them, with the sound of
trumpettes, noyse of pytchers, and metueplous and sodayne appearynge of
candels, in suche wyse that the Hebrewes neuer drawyng their swerdes, one of
them slewe an other.

Of Barache, who trustyng vpon the prophete of the woman Deboza, set
vpo the excedyngly well appoynted hooste of the Captayne Selara, and slewe
the same not leauyng one man alitue, and finally put kynge Jabin to flight, who
anon after was slayne of a woman.

Of Sampson, who beyng ayded with the helpe of God achued manye
wonderful enterpryses against the Philistians, for the defence of his countrey;
the whiche coulde not be done of a greate manye together, no; yet by any pull-
saunce and strength of mannes bodye.

Of Jephthae, who albeit he was a vile basterd, and of base fortune in his
countrey, yet trustyng vpon Goddes helpe had a metueplous goodly victorie
ouer the Ammonites enynyes to his people.

Of Dauid, who besydes so many victories by Gods helpe gotten, besydes
so many teoperdies as he escaped by the preservation of almighty God, feared
not beyng but a younge striplyng, and wythout armoure, to encountre wyth
Goliath well weaponed and armed at all peces, whom he ouerthrewe with the
stroke of a stynge, bycause God should haue the whole glozy and prayse of this
victorie and not man.

Of Samuell, who withoute anye garde of men to defende his personage,
gouerned many yeares the people of Israell, freely executyng the office of a
Iudge and chief ruler among them, beyng well assured that God woulde re-
warde, yf any man dyd any thyng aryght in his ministracion. Tyme (I sape)
woulde sayle me yf I woulde procede in recityng of al such exâples. I wyl here
ouerhyy so many noble Prophetes, as puttyng they; trust in God set naught
by the threathnynges of tyzantes: so many men of renommed holines as not by
worldly goodes & riches, but by the ayde of god in who they put their whole af-
fyaunce dyd wôderful dedes, & by they; worthy actes left behynde the a memori-
al of the selues vnto posteritie. For, to make a bryef & sumarie rehearsal of stoyes
omittynge the names of thauctours, it is to be ascribed vnto they; sayth y they
beyng as touchyng all other thynges vnable, dyd by the helpe of God subdue
most wealthye and riche kyngdomes, and coulde not by any maner of feare be
brought from the keepyng of the lawe that was geuen them, lokyng for they;
reward of almyghtie God. And because no delayeng of the promyses minished
their sayth, at length they attayned those thynges whiche God promysed vnto
their elders. They obteyned of him by faithfull prayes that whiche coulde in
no wyse be done by the course of nature. They were by his preservation dely-
uered from excedyng greate daungers. The Lyons whiche agaynste other are
of fiercenesse inuincible, they either vanquished, or proued harmles, as though
their mouthes beyng stopped, or els their claws faste bownden, they had had
no power to hurt those whom God woulde haue preserved without any annoy-
aunce. When they were cast into the myddes of the fyre, they so endured with-
oute hurte, as though they had quenched the naturall violence and heate ther-
of with their bodyes. Agayne, by the protection of God they escaped awaye
safe from their enemyes swerdes that were drawen agaynste them. Further-

The paraphrase of Erasmus byon the Epistle

more God recomfortyng them, they receyued after vtter desperation, exceeding greate strength and courage of mynde, insomuche that beyng not longe befoze taken for dead me, they sodaynly acquitted them selues manfully in battayll, & valiantly put to flight their enemies, of whom they were invaded. Moreover the faith also of the women deserued that the mothers sawe their deade children reyled from death to lyfe agayne.

The texte.

Other were racked, and woulde not be deliuered, that they myght inherite a better resurrection. Agayne other were tried with mockynges and scourgynges, mozeouer, with bondes and prysonmente, were stoned, were hewen asunder, were tempted, were slayne with swerd, walked by and downe in shepe skynnes, & goates skynnes, being destitute, troubled and bered, whiche men the world was not worthy of: They wandred in wildernes and in mountaynes, and in denues, & caues of the earth.

Other beyng racked, and soze handled with diuerse kyndes of tourmentes, were better wyllyng to dye in suche paynes, then to be delyuered with conditi- on to obeye the wycked commaundementes of Prynces: yeldyng with greate fayth they lyues to almyghty God, whiche they knew ryght wel they should receyue agayne with vauntage in the resurrection of the deade, supposyng it muche better to bye immortallitie with the losse of this Nozte and transitorie lyfe, then for a lytle gayne of small tyme to loose the lyfe eternall. Agayne by reason of a constaunt desyre they had to mayntayne the trueth and rightuous- nes, they were iestyng stocks to all the world, laughed to skorne of euery bodye, and slaudered for madde menne, and workers of myschic, and not on- ly put to shame for theyr faith towards God, but also had their vertue and goodnesse tryed with scourgynges, and mozeouer with bondes and emprison- ment. Furthermoze they were stoned, hewen a sonder, and toyne in peces wyth horrible punishmente of bodye. To make an ende, with what kynde of euyls were they not tryed with al: They dyed with dynt of swerde, beyng fully per- swaded that good men coulde not by very death be seuered from God.

Agayne suche of them as chaunced not to make an ende of their tourmentes by death, wanne nothyng els by prolongyng of their lyues, but that they were tourmented with long martyrdome. They were banished from their houses, and beyng dyuen oute of townes wandred by and downe in wyldernesse lyke wilde bestes, couered, as well as it woulde be, with shepe skynnes, and Goate skynnes, hauyng scarcitie of all necessaries, vexed with the cruelnesse of perse- cutours ready to assaile them on euery syde, & troubled with the sondrye disco- modities and miseries of this lyfe, beyng so vnworthy to suffre suche euils and aduersities, that the world was rather not worthy to haue in it so vertuous and holy men: in suche wyse, that God moughte seme euen for this purpose to haue taken them away from the company of men, lest they beyng men of pure and chaste conuersation, should haue ledde their lyues among despyled persons and synners. Therfoze they wandered aboute in wyld mountaynes, hauyng no certayne habitacion or dwellyng place to refozte vnto, vsyng Denues and Caues of the earth in the steede of houses.

The texte.

And these al thowgh faith obtayned good report & receined not the promyse, because god had prouided a better thing for vs that they without vs, should not be made perfecte.

And all these befoze named albeit they haue not yet obtayned the rewarde promysed them for their godly lyuyng, whiche rewarde shalbe geuen them at the generall resurrection of the bodyes: Yet haue they deserued perpetuall prayse for the constantnesse of their fayth. Some man wyl here saye: wdy hath

hath not euery man his rewarde by and by gyuen him after death: For soothe it hath so pleased almyghty God, that all the whole bodye of Christe shall receiue the glozy of immortallitie together. For we are all membes of the same body: and suche as haue gone befoze vs do gladly tarpe for vs, to thende that they maye wholy and ioyntly with theyr bodyes, and all the felowshyppe of theyr b:ethren, entre into thenheritaunce of eternal glozy, and be conioyned vnto their heade.

The. xii. Chapter.

Wherefoze, let vs also (scynge that we are compassed wpth so great a myltitude of wytnesses) laye awaye all that presseth downe, and the sinne that hangeth so fast on, let vs run with pacience vnto the barrail that is set befoze vs, loking vnto Iesus Christe the author and finisher of our faith, which (for the ioye that was set befoze hym) abode the crosse & despyed the shame, and is set downe on the right hande of the thronc of God. Consider therfoze, howe that he endured suche speaking against hym of sinners, lest ye shoulde be wteried, & faint in your mindes. For ye haue not yet resisted vnto blood, stryuing agaynst synne: And haue forgotten the exhortacion, whych speaketh vnto you as vnto children: My sonne, despise not thou the chastenynge of the Lorde, nether sainte, when thou art rebuked of hym: for whom the Lorde loueth hym he chasteneth: pea, he scourgeth euery sonne that he recepueth,

The texte,



Synge then we are compassed with so great a companye, and as it were with a cloude of those, who, euen in the olde testamente, witnessed by sufferynge of suche euels as are befoze rehearsed that they beleued the promyses of God with all their harte, let vs also encouraged by their examles see that we caste frome vs the burthen or fardell of cozpozall thynges and bodelye lustes, whiche letteth the mynde laden with cares to desyre thynges celestiall, and put awaye synne that helde vs faste on euery syde: and fynally beyng incensed and set a fyze with the hope of heauenly thynges, runne manfully in this raase that is set befoze vs, and by no afflyccions, nor any withdrawynge of the mynde be stayed and holden backe from runnyng the course that we haue begonne, neuer castyng our eyes asyde from Iesu Christe, who as he is the verpe cause that we haue conceyued this belefe on God, so wyll he synpse what he hath begonne in vs. Let vs considze what waye he entred in, and whitherto he came, who whereas he myght by reason he was innocent and gyltlesse haue escaped death, and bene as much without all payne and passion, as he was without all synne, yet he despyynge the ioyes of this worlde suffred death, and to thentent his death should be the greuouset haupng reproche soyned therwith, he suffered the death of the crosse. For men make not so muche a doo to suffre a glorious death. Ye see whiche waye he entred in. Howe whitherto came he? By despisyng of this lyfe, he attained immortallitie: By despisyng and setting naught by worldly reproche, he attayned euerlastyng glozye in heauen, where he nowe sitteth on the ryght hande of the royall thronc of God the father. When ye withall haste auauance poute selves to come to be partakers of this glozie thozowe reproche and dyuerse paynful afflyccions, then, lest you dyscouraged in your myndes shoulde at any tyme by thenforcemente of wearynesse ceaseto runne in the raase that is sette befoze you, considze with your selves how that poute capytayne, who neuer knewe anye manoure of synne, dyd neuer thelesse, to shewe vs an examle of true pacience, endure so greate rebukes, so muche

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muche shame and bylanye, suche myſtepoyses and falſe accuſacions, that he let the wycked Jewes compell hym to ſuffre the very punyſhement of the croſſe. Be not ye therfoze dyſmayed, who beyng not cleane withoute ſynne: do ſuffre leſſe dyſpleaſures and perſecution. Better it were for a man to dye a thouſande tymes, then to fall agayne into his former ſynfull lyfe. Howbeit you, who haue hitherto ſuffred ſmall perſecution and aduerſitie, haue not as yet reſiſted ſinne vnto ſheadyng of bloud, the whiche ſynne fierlye aſſaulteth you, ſtryuynge agaynſt it, and yet you do by and by ſuppoſe that God hath forſaken you, and remember not what the mercyfull father ſpeaketh vnto you, as vnto his chyldren, in the myſticall pꝛouerbes, comfortynge you, and with ſwete and gentle wordes exhortynge you to greate and valiaunte courage of mynde: *My ſonne* (ſayth he) deſpiſe not thou the chaſtenyng of the Loꝛde: neither deſpaire thou when ſoever he rebuketh thee. For whom the Loꝛde loueth, him he chaſteneth with the euels and aduerſities of this lyfe, and ſcourgeth euery ſonne that he receyuethe.

The text.

If ye endure chaſtenyng, god offereth hymſelfe vnto you as vnto ſonnes. What ſonne is he whom the father chaſteneth not? If ye be not vnder correccion, wherof al are partakers, then are ye baſtardes and not ſonnes. Therefore ſeynge we haue had fathers of our fleiſhe, whych corrected vs, & we gaue them reuerence: ſhall we nowe not much rather be in ſubiectiõ vnto the father of ſpꝛytes, & lyue? And they beſely for a ſeawe daies nurtured vs, after theyꝝ own pleaſure, but he nurtuerech vs for our profite, to the intent that he may miniſter of his holines vnto vs. No maner chaſtenyng for the preſent tyme ſemeth to be iſouus, but greuous: neuertheles after warde, it byngeth the quiet fruit of righteousnes, vnto them whiche are exerciſed thereby.

If ye patiently endure ſuch chaſtenyng, God acknowledgeth his ſonnes, and offereth him ſelfe to you agayne as a mercyfull and louyng father, & doeth not exclude you from thenheritance of the lyfe celeftiall. Thynke you that you are therfoze hated, and nothyng regarded of God, bycauſe ye are afflicted with ſyche euels of this woꝛld: Nay, rather this ought to be an argument that ye are appoynted to be the heyres of the fathers inheritance. For what father is he that doeth not ſomewhyles chaſten his ſonne whom he acknowledgeth for his owne: Furthermore, ſyth that all vertuouſe men and good lyuers, whom God eyther doth, or hath dearly loued, haue bene by tempoꝛall afflictions taughte true vertue, and godly lyuyng, yf you be free from ſuche fatherlye correccion, verely it is a manifeſt prooſe that ye are baſtardes, & not true natural ſonnes. If we haue not onely ſuffred, but alſo gyuen reuerence to oure parentes, of whome we are begotten as touchyng the fleſhe onely, whyles they dyd wyth checkes and laſhes teache vs the comen behauiour of this lyfe, not ſtruyng agaynſt their auctoritie, but ſo interpreting their doyngeſ, as though they howſoever they dalte wyth vs, they dyd all of a frendelye mynde, and good ſeale towards vs: ſhall not we then muche moze ſubmytte and yelde our ſelſes to the heauenly father, who is not onely the auctour of bodyes, but of ſpꝛytes, fullye perſuaded with our ſelſes herein, that what euels and aduerſities ſo ever he ſuffreth vs to be afflicted with all, he doeth neuertheles with a fatherly mynde pꝛouyde for our ſoule health and ſaluacion? As the cozpoꝛall father is not ſo cruell agaynſt his ſonne as to ſley him, but to preſerue him, and make him better: ſo God chaſteneth vs in this woꝛlde to the intent we maye lyue for euer in the woꝛlde to come. And thoſe parentes inſtructed vs as they would them ſelſes, oftentymes abuſyng their auctoritie, and inſtructed vs for a ſhozte tyme in thynges

thynges transitorie, and suche thynges as wyl soone perishe, as in those which perterne to the gettinge and mayntenaunce of worldye substance, yea and many tymes haupng an eye to their owne profyte, they instructed vs to thys ende, bycause they would be holpen with our obsequitous and ready diligence. But this father who hath no nede of vs, alwayes regardeth our commodities, and that our singuler profites and commodities.

For he goeth not aboute to haue vs enryched with earthly goodes, neyther to haue vs succede in the lpyelod of a fewe acres of lande, but to giue vs his heauenly gyftes, that is to witte, holynesse in this world, and in the worlde to come euerlastyng blysse and felicitie. Whoso wyl earnestly consyde with hym selfe this so greate and excellent profite shall casely awaye wyth the tempoal grief of this present life. For when other parentes do correcte their children, ymaner of chastysyng hath in it no pleasure, but payne and grief for the tyme presente, yet after the children be come to mannes state, and begynne once to perceiue howe muche good that payne dyd them, then do they greatly reioyse that euer they were beaten and chydde, and with lawghyng countenaunce rendre them thanks whom they suffred befoze with wepyng eyes. Euen so the calamitie and miserye of this worlde is in the meane tyme whyles it hangeth ouer oure heades, and vexeth these mortall bodyes, greuous to oure senses. But this payne, this vexation and trouble, wherwith oure soules also by reason of the societie they haue with the body are dysquieted, byngeth forth the quyet and swete fruite of rightuousnes in due season. Affliction teacheth godlynesse, godlines byngeth the toyes of a good mynd or cleare conscience, a good mynd byngeth forth immortallitie. Therfoze lette no mannes hartte fayle hym in this most godly cause. The sweate and labour is greate, but the rewarde is hygh and excellent, but the rewarde gyuet is faythfull.

Stretche furthe therfoze the handes whych were let downe, and the weake knees: se that ye haue straight steppes vnto your fete lest any halting turne you out of the waye: yea, let it rather be healed. Followe peace with all men & holynes: without the whych no man shall see the Lord. And loke that no man be destitute of the grace of God lest any roote of bytternesse sprynge vp and trouble, & thereby many be despyled: that there be no fornicator, or vnclene person, as Esau whych for one messe of meate sold his birthright. For ye know how that after ward when he would by inheritaunce haue obtrayued blessinge, he was put by. For he founde no place of repentaunce, though he sought it with teares.

The texte.

Followe you stout wastelers, and lustye runners: bestyze youre wettye handes, plucke vp your weake and soltryng knees, and runne streyght to the marke that is set befoze you. Let not the foote tournyng hither and thither wander out of the streyght waye: Yea rather yf you haue wandered anye whit at all, yf ye haue bene heretofore slacke in runnyng, see ye make amendes with a newe lustie courage and cherefulnesse. Neither is it ynough for you that euery man runne for his own behofe takyng no care for other: yea rather be you so conioyned in peace and concozde, that by a comon diligence one of you be carefull for an other, and take hede lest anye runnyng in this comon course fall from the grace of God: lest any lackyng that holynesse whiche becommeth the membes of Christ to haue, and wythout whiche no man shall see God, be oneous vnto the bodye, and vnworthye to haue the chief game or rewarde whiche is set befoze vs gyuen hym: And fynally lest anye roote of bytternesse sprynge vp, and trouble the godlye endeuours of other whiche hasten vnto heauenlye thynges: and beyng suffred to spread abrode despyle a greate manye with hys infection.

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infection. Let there be no fornicatour amonge you, or any person that is otherwise vnclane, and gyuen vnto the bealy. For suche lustes and beastly desires do let you to runne, and cause you to tounne out of the ryghte waye, and thus commeth it to passe, that whyles you regarde suche coloured & apparent good thynges, ye loose that chiefe gaine and euerlasting rewarde. So for a suretye chaunced it vnto Esau, who beynge hongrey solde his byrthynght for the pleasure of one meale of meate, purchasyng himselfe perpetuall repentance for a small pleasure, that endured but a while. For this must you remembre to the intent it maye be an example for you, howe that afterwarde when he wente aboute to haue his byrthynght restored vnto him agayne by his fathers blessing, he was put by, and was neuer y better for his late repentance, althoughe he testified by greate abundaunce of teares that he was soye for his deedes. That byttenesse whiche springeth of hatred, enuye, and arrogaince, bycaket brotherly con corde: pleasure of the bodye, supertuipie, and other desires of fleshy thynges do defyle pure and holy liuyng. Nowe these two thynges, that is to witte con corde and pure liuyng, must not decaye amonge you: Neither can the one of them be without the other. For amonge vnclane persones and synners, there is no con corde wherwith God is pleased: neyther can there be any good and byrtyght liuyng where as dis corde and debate rayneth. Therfore we ought also to take good hede lest we most folyshly exchaunge then heretance of the kyngdome of heauen, with the pleasures of this woylde. The thynges wherunto we hasten are heauenly, wherfoze we muste come pure and cleane: we must continually walke in the lyght of the gospell. Our holye liuyng must agree with so holy a pofession. You must nedes be answerable vnto your hye pyest and his lawe in your conuersation.

The texte,

For ye are not come vnto the mount that is touched, and vnto burnyng fyre, nor vnto storme and darkenes, and tempestes of wether, and sounde of a trompe, and the voyce of wordes, whych voyce they (that heard it) wished awaye, that the communication should not be spoken to them: For they could not abide that which was commaunded. Yet a beast touche the mouraygne it shalbe stoned, or thurst thowwe with a dart: so terriblye was the syght whych appeared. Moses said: I feare & quake. But ye are come vnto the mount Syon, and to the cytie of the liuyng god, the celestial Hierusalem: and to an innumerable syght of anges: and to the congregacion of the first borne sonnes, whych are wyrtten in heauen, & to god the iudge of all, and to the spirites of iust and perfecte men, & to Iesus the mediator of the new testamēt, and to the sprinkeling of the blood that speaketh better then thy blouds of Abel.

For ye are not come vnto the mount of Syna, whiche maye be touched with bodye, as youre forefathers came once, what tyme Moses publyshed the lawe: and vnto a burnyng fyre whiche is felte and perceyued with mannes senses, nor vnto a storme and darkenesse, and vnto tempestes of wedye, and sounde of a trompe, all the whiche thynges are perceyued with the eares, and eyes: nor to the voyce of wordes, which although they myght haue bene hearde with mannes eares by reason they were pronounced with breath, and dyd lytle or nothyng represent the true voyce of God, yet had they suche a Maicste in them, that the people hearyng the terrible noyse of the same, were greatly afeard, and despyed almyghtie God that he would not him selfe speake anye moze vnto them, but that Moses would with his voyce publyshe suche thynges as God had commaunded. Els shoulde that voyce of God haue bene moze terriblye then the weakenesse of mannes eares had bene able to awaye with all. Suche a reuerende feare and dreade had those thynges whiche were done

done onely to fygure the lawe of the gospell, that the people was kepte a losse, & not suffred to touche the mounte, & also a proclamation made by commaundement, that what beast soeuer touched the same should be stoned, or thrust thowt we with a darte. For so terrible was the sight of the thinges which were shewed vnto the cozpozall senses, & Moyses himselte was abashed, & quaked for feare therof. Howbeit you are not come to luche a sensible sighte, whiche was a shadowe and figure of farre better thynges, but to thinges & haue in the more verttie then is contepned herin, forasmuche as they are perceiued with & mynd or soule, & not with bodely senses: Ye are come, I saye, to the spirituall mounte of Syon which is touched with the spirite, & not with handes: to heauenly Ierusalem the Citie of the lyuyng God where is peace euetlasting: to an vnumerable syght of angels the heade peares & inhabitauntes thereof: to the congregatton of the chyldren of god who haue not lost their byzthright with Esau, but by cleaupnge vnto Chyrste haue deserued to be registred in heauen where they are made citizens: to God the iudge of all, who is the soueraigne personage of that common wealth: to the spirites and soules of rightuous men, who for their perfite godlynes and good lyuyng are ioyued to the companie and felowshyp of heauen, and associat with the iudge: to Iesus the hie priest of the newe testament who doth not destroy vs, but restoze vs vnto fauoure: & to his blood by whose sprynklyng soules are pouaged & whiche speaketh bettre then the blood of Abel. For & blood desyred vengeaunce: but this obteyneth pardon.

Se that ye despyse nor hym, that speaketh. For if they escaped not, which refused him that spake ou peeth, muche more shall we not escape, yf we rure awaye from hym, that speaketh from heauen, whose voice then shoke the peeth, and now hath declared, saying: yet once moze will I make, not the earth onely, but also heauen. Where as he saith: yet once moze, it signifieth the remouinge awaye of those thynges whiche are shaken, as of thinges which haue ended their course: that the thinges, whiche are not shaken maye remaine. Wherefore, yf we receiue the kyngdom whiche can not be moued, we haue grace wherby we may so serue God and that we may please hym with reuerence & godly feare. For our God is a consuming fyre.

The texte.

The more mercifully & louingly his blood speaketh for vs, the more oughte we to beware lest we despise him who speaketh so for vs. For if they escaped not punishment for despylyng of the worde, who refused Moyses a man speaking on earth, then shall we suffre muche greuouset punishment yf we tourne awaye from Chyrst speaking vnto vs from heauen, whose voyce then shoke the earth, to feare them by sensible feare from spynnyng. But what threateneth he nowe to do from heauen by the prophet Aggeus: yet once moze, sayeth he, will I make, not the earth only, but also heauen, to the entent & not only earthly men, but also heauenly thynges maye quake & feare. Now where he sayeth: yet once moze: it signifieth the remouyng awaye of those thinges which are shaken, of such thynges, I saie, as are made with mens handes, as the temple, and citie of Ierusalem, to thende that those thinges which are not made with mennes handes, & therfoze inasmuche as they are eternall can not be shaken, maye contynue. The Jewes do glory & take pride in their tēple, they glorye in their holy citte, but the tūne shall come when these thinges shall not be. They loke after a kyngdome, but we see it translated and remoued to an other place. Let vs therfoze who thoroze the benefite and grace of the holy gost haue begonne to endeuour our selues to attayne the kyngdome of heauen (the whiche can in no wyse be shaken) perseuer in the benefite of almyghtie God.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Let vs continue in this heauenly temple, & serue God with suche reuerence and feare, that we may with puritie of minde and conscience please him, who requirerth not from hence forth any other kynde of sacrifice. If our forefathers were afearde to do any thyng whyles they were makynge of their sacrifices wherewith they shuld offend the eyes of men: how much moze hede the ought we to take in these spirituall sacrifices lest we do any thyng whyche maye offende the eyes of almyghtie God. If in tymes past he were in daunger who came vnto the holy places without due obseruation of certayne ceremonies: how much greater peryll then shall we be in yf we presume to come with vncleane myndes vnto God, who is not a bodely fyre (the which as it is kyndled, so may it be quenched agayne) but a fyre ful of strengthe and efficacie, and also suche a one as byyngeth to nought and destruction what thyng soeuer it lusteth.

The .xiii. Chapter.

Let brotherly loue continue. Be not forgetfull to lodge straungers. For thereby haue diuerse men lodged angels vnwares. Remember them that are in bondes, euen as though ye were bound with them your selues. Be mynde full of them which are in aduersitie, as ye whiche are yet in the body. Wedlocke is to be had in honoz among all men, and the bed vnderlyed. As for whozekeepers and aduouterers God shall iudge them. Let your conuersation be without couetousnes, & be content with suche thynges as ye haue already. For he hath sayd: I wyl not faile the nether forsake the: so that we may boldly say: the lorde is my helper, and I will not feare what man maye do vnto me. Remember them whyche haue the ouersight of you, which haue spoken vnto you the worde of God, whose sayth se that ye folowe, and consider the ende of their conuersation.

The text.



Et brotherly loue contynue among you, sens that ye are members of the same bodye. Loue ye not suche onely as are daylye conuersaunt with you, but also those whiche resorte as straungers vnto you. For hospitalitie is highlye commended before God, in so much that herebye Abraham deserued to receyue vnwares Angels to lodgyng when he thought he had done that good tourne and pleasure vnto men. Furthermoze Christen charitie requireth also this, that the calamitie of suche as are in prison and bondes for the professyng of Christe moue you no lesse then if your selues were in lyke case: and that their tourment and payne (who are ellwise afflicted with diuerse euels and aduersities) so styre you to pittie and compassion, that it maye herebye appeare that you haue a body subject to the selfe same euils, and are not compassionlesse for those paynes and sorowes whiche the members of the same bodye do suffre. Let wedlocke, the whiche beyng kept as it oughte to be had due honour, euen among the heathen people, be lykewise had in honour and reuerence among you: and let not the bed of matrimonye be defiled with any kynd of aduouty. As for whozekeepers & aduouters God shall iudge the. Let your conuersation be without couetousnes, in such wise that you may contente your selues with such thynges as you alreadye possesse, as menne liuyng without provision and care for any thyng to come. For god made such a promise vnto Josue, & in Josue to al that put their cofydence & trust in him: I wil not faile the, saith he, neither forsake the: so that trusting on him, we maye boldly saye as the prophet saith in the mysticall psalme: The lorde is my helper, I will not feare what man maye do vnto me. Regarde you those whiche haue the ouersight of you, of whom you haue receyued, not mannes doctrine, but the worde of God, and see that they lacke nothyng necessarie for them, vnto whose wordes lyke as at the begynnyng you gaue credence, so loke vpon their lpyng as on a marke, and folowe their faithe, confyderpng how constauntly they abyde in the profes-
 sion of

tion of the gospell vnto their lyues ende. The gospell once taughte a ryghte, is alwayes most stedfastly to be holden and obserued.

Jesus Christ yester daye, and to daye, and the same continueth for euer. We not caried aboute wyth diuerse and strange lernynge. For it is a good thyng that the heart be stablyshed with grace, not with meates, whych haue not profited them that haue had thei^r passyme in them. We haue an aulter wherof they maye not eate whych serue in the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beastes whose bloude, is broughte into the holyc place by the hygh pryeste to poure sinne, are burnt without the tentes. Therefore Jesus also to sanctifie the people with his owne bloude sufferd without the gate. Let vs go furthe therefore vnto hym out of the tentes, and suffer rebuke wyth hym. For here haue we no continuyng cite: but we seeke one to come. The text.

For as Jesus Christ was yester daye, and is to daye, and euermore shalbe tyme without ende, and neuer shalbe chaunged: so shal his doctryne continue for euer. Therefore abyde you stable and stedfast herein, and be not as incine, leanyng vpon no sure foundatton, carped aboute with newe and diuerse lernynge. The lawe of Moyses taughte no other thyng then the gospell nowe teacheth, but after an other fashion. It is a poynte of folly to sticke styll vnto shadowes, after that veritie is come to lycht. And yet are there some which renewe agayne the olde iewyshe religion nowe abrogate and dysanulled, holdyng opinion that vertue and godlye lypunge standeth in meates and cozporall lode, the whiche thynges suche as haue superstitiously obserued, haue nothyng profited therby so thattaynyng of ryghtuousnesse. Whoso despyeth to attayne perkyte and true godlynesse, which hath not an onely shadowe of ryghtuousnes, but stablysheth the mynde with a cleare conscience befoze God: lette hym continew in grace and fayth, and leane vpon this foundacion whiche Christe hath layde, and then shall he not wauer with Jewyshe superstitions. Let the Jewes counte it a holy thyng to absteyne frome certayne meates, euen frome suche as are offred by in sacrifice. We also haue a muche holycer aulter, wherof it is not lawfull for them to eate, who beyng gyuen as yet vnto the ceremonies of the lawe, knowe not the grace of the gospel, wherby is gyuen true soule health and saluation. For, accordyng vnto the prescription of the law, the carcasses of those beastes whose bloude is accustomedly offred for sinne by the hye pryest in the tabernacles called holy, are by commaundement burned withoute the tentes, as though the bloude had in it some holy thyng, notwithstandinge the bodies, as thynges vncleane and despyed, are carped oute to be burned in unholye places, and therefore they absteyne from them, as from vncleane meates. These folkes haue the shadowe, but we embrace that which the shadowe hath signified. They were neuer the holier in minde after they were spynkled with blood, neither were they any whit the cleaner because they absteyned from eatyng of þ bodies, sens their soules were wholly dysteyned w sinne & viciousnes. We embrace Jesus our sacrifice & hie pryest, who, as it were alludyng to the figure of the lawe, would be crucified without the gate of the cite of Ierusalem, there to poure his people with his most precious bloude, whose exāple we must not superstitiously, but deuoutely folowe. And this shall we do, yf we also take vp our crosse, & folow him goyng out fro the copainye of men, as fro a knot or felowship of mischeuous persons. Let vs likewise go out, & departe fro meadyng with this world, & take more pleasure to suffre reproch for Christes sake, then to take þ fruition of worldly glory. Let vs byd this earthly cite fare well, who haue not here a continuyng cite, but loke after one to come; whiche is celestiall and euerlastyng.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the Epistle

Merely he goeth out of the citie, who so putteth away and subdueth th'affections and lustes of the fleshe, and wholye giueth himselfe to heauenlye contemplation.

The xxxc.

By hym therefore do we offer sacrifice of laude alwaies to God, that is to saye: the frute of those lippes, whych confesse his name. & do good & distribute toger nor, for with suche sacrifices God is pleased. Obeye them that haue the ouersyght of you, and submit your selues vnto them, for they watch for your soules, euen as they that must geue accptes: that they maye do it with ioye, & not with grieue. For that is an vnproffable thinge for you.

We offre not by our sacrifice within the walles, but goe in lyke manour out of the citie with oure hye priest Christe, and contynuallye offre a certayne sacrifice pleasaunt and acceptable vnto God thozowe hym, not any beast, nor corne of the fildes, but the frute of lippes, of lippes, I saye, not aloneyve of the bodye, but also of the soule by the whiche we acknowlage the benefytes of God towardes vs, and haurnge Christes crosse in remembraunce, rende thanks for the rempsion of oure synnes, and so manye grstes as we are endued with all. Of this aulter the Jewes are not partakers, who abyde still within the walles, and loue nothyng but that whiche is carnall. Nowe learne you also an other kynde of sacrifice, woorthy to be a sacrifice of the ghospell, whiche we muste continuallye make to please almyghtie God with all.

Oure neyghboure is to be holpen with our benefites, and yf the same be in necessitie, then ought we to succour him with thaide of our goodes and substaunce. For by suche sacrifices goddes fauour is sooner obteyned, then by the trisyng obseruaunces and constitucions of the Jewes, without regarde of our christi-an brother. Obey you those whiche haue the ouersyghte of you, submyttinge poure selues vnto them, althoughe they be euell persons, so long as they go not aboute to enforce you to vngodlynesse. For when they doe accorpyng to their office and vocation, they watche for youre soules inasmuche as they prouide for your soule health and saluacion, and that with their owne peryll, bycause they shall gyue an accomptes of their ministracion vnto almyghtie God, from whome all power commeth. You shall greatlye ease them of their burthen, yf you shewe your selues obsequious and obedyent vnto them, to thentente that what so euer they do, they maye doe it with righte good will and gladly, rather then with euell wyll and grudgng. For that is bothe greuous vnto them, and also vnto you vnproffable. It greueth them that they haue taken so muche payne without any profite. On thother syde, it is not expedient for you to pro- uoke goddes wyath agaynst you, thozowe your dyfobedience.

The xxxc.

Praye for vs. For we trust we haue a good conscience among all men, & desire to lyue honestly. But I desyre you the moze, that ye so do, that I maye be restored to you the so- ner. The God of peace that brought agayn from death our Lorde Iesus the greate shep- herd of the shepe through the bloude of the euerlasting testamēt, make you perfect in al good workes, to do his will & bying to passe, that the thing whych ye do, maye be pleasit in his syght through Iesus Christ. To whom be prayse for euer while þ world endureth Amen.

Praye ye vnto God for my brethren and me. For (as it semeth) I ought to be nombred among your good pastours and byshoppes. Whether I be allowed of all men or no, I cannot tell, yet I trust I haue demeaned my seife as honestly

honestye and good conscience woulde amonge all those whiche are desyrous to lyue after the rule of the gospell. And this do I the moze earnestly desyre you to do, to thentent I maye the sonct be restozed vnto you agayne. In the meane season I lyke wylse praye for you, that it maye please God thauctour of peace whiche hath rayled agayne from death that chiefe shepherd and pastour of his shepe our Lo:de Iesus Chryste, who when he was relyued entted into heauen thozowe his bloude, there to make intercession for vs, vnto the father, with the whiche bloude he hath hallowed the newe and euerlastyng testament: I praye for you (I say) that it maye please him to make you perfite in all good woꝝkes, to thentente you maye satisfie and accomplishe his will, and that it maye further please him to byng to passe that the thinge whiche ye do may be pleasaunt and acceptable in his sight, and that thozow his sonne Iesue Chryst, who is alwayes present and setterth forth oure sacrifices: vnto whom all gloꝝie is due, not onely in this present lyfe, but also for euermoze. Amen. There is nothyng that we can chalēge and ascribe vnto our selves for our well doinges. It is his gyfte, and commeth of him what so euer we doe wherewith God is pleased.

I beseeche you brethꝛen, suffre the woꝝde of exhortacion: for we haue wrytten vnto you The texts.
 in fewe woꝝdes. Ye knowe our brother Timothe, that he is at lybercie: with whom (yf he come shortly) I wyll se you. Salute them that haue the ouersyght of you, & all the salutes. They of Italy salute you, & grace be with you all. Amen.

These thinges haue I wrytten for your exhortacion, desyꝛyng you to take in good parte that I haue done of a good mynde and purpose. I haue wrytten vnto you in fewe woꝝdes, as he who purposeth shortly to see you. You shal vnderstande that Timothe is not with me at this present. For I haue sent him to an other place. If he retourne shortly I wyll come with him and se you.

Haue me commended to all suche as haue the ouersyght of you, and furthermoze to the whole companie of saynctes oꝝ good chꝛistians. The Italians salute you. The grace and fauour of god be with you all. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon the
 Epistle to the Hebrues.